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УКРАЇНСЬКІ ВІСТІ

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Is Russia funding ISIS terrorists?

See Page 5

PHOTO – MARCO LEVYTSKY

Children lay flowers at the monument to victims of the Holodomor in Edmonton. On the right is a Holodomor survivor, Leonid Korownyk.

Edmonton commemorates Holodomor

Keynote speaker stresses the need for greater awareness of this genocide

By Marco Levytsky

As Canadians, we share a common responsibility to become better informed about past atrocities and genocides including the Holodomor, said the keynote speaker at Edmonton's Holodomor commemoration, November 28.

"There can be no dispute our nation and others delayed far too long in recognizing the Holodomor as a genocide. We certainly failed at the time to respond to the pleas for intervention and assistance. This has been made graphically clear to me by the work of Canadians scholars," said Linda Duncan, NDP MP for Edmonton Strathcona at the ceremony organized by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Edmonton Branch at City Hall.

Referring to research provided by Drs. Bohdan Klid and Serge Cipko of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, Duncan noted that in October 1933 the Ukrainian National Council of Canada wrote to both the Prime Minister and Leader of the Official Opposition requesting that the Canadian government urgently lead a neutral investigation into the mass starvation suffered in Ukraine despite evidence of bumper crops.

"They offered to share evidence of these atrocities obtained from first hand reports. Documents suggest that requests to deploy Canadian food relief to Ukraine also became mired in trade disputes between Canada and the USSR. Despite concerted pleas by the Canadian Ukrainian community,

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A copy of the icon of the Holy Mother of God of Hoshiv which is believed to be working miracles. The original is in the Basilian Monastery at Hoshiv in Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast.

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Від «Жіночої сотні» до «Невидимого батальйону»

Як воюють українки?

Євгенія Олійник, *Радіо Свобода*

У Києві 4 грудня презентували перше соціологічне дослідження, присвячене участі жінок у війні на Донбасі. Його назва – «Невидимий батальйон» – метафорична, адже досвід жінок в українській армії здебільшого є непомітним як для громадськості, так і для законодавства. Так, жінки-військові не можуть обіймати значного переліку посад, мають гірше забезпечення та вимушені постійно спростовувати стереотипи щодо власних здібностей. Але автори дослідження переконані: жінки здатні воювати значно краще, ніж деякі генерали-чоловіки, які встановлюють для них обмеження.

Основою дослідження «Невидимий батальйон» стали близько 50 інтерв'ю з чоловіками та жінками, що служать у зоні бойових дій. Окрема частина присвячена участі жінок у Євромайдані, зокрема, «Жіночій сотні», адже невдовзі після революції багато жінок із неї стали воїнами.

Перш за все, соціологи з'ясовували мотивацію жінок-добровольців. Усі вони прийшли на фронт із патріотичних міркувань і планували залишатись там до кінця війни. Ці жінки, зазначають дослідники, зазвичай значно більш мотивовані за чоловіків: щоб потрапити на війну, їм потрібно подолати стереотипи, довести право воювати і змиритися з тим, що на соціальний захист можна не розраховувати.

Українське законодавство визначає перелік посад, які не можуть обіймати жінки. Йдеться не лише про професії снайпера або розвідника. Жінки також не можуть бути, з-поміж іншого, водіями, фотографами, кіномеханіками, інструкторами або перекладачами. Усі посади, в назвах яких є слова «начальник» або «командир», недоступні для жінок, каже одна координаторка дослідження і керівник Центру аеророзвідки Марія Берлінська, виняток становить вакансія начальниці лазні. «Начальником продовольчого пункту жінка бути не може. Зате кухаркою – запросто», – каже вона.

Українські жінки-військовослужбовці під час репетиції військового параду до Дня Незалежності України. Київ, серпень 2015 року

Ці норми прописані у двох документах: «Тимчасовому переліку посад рядового сержантського, старшинського складу» від травня 2014 року і «Наказі міністра оборони про перелік посад офіцерського складу, на які можуть призначати жінок, прийнятих на військову службу за контрактом».

Однак, де-факто жінки виконують ті самі завдання, що й чоловіки, але або ніде не зареєстровані, або офіційно обіймають інші посади. Відповідно, не мають права на пільги та соціальні виплати, каже Марія Берлінська.

До війни цю ситуацію замовчували. Знали хіба що історію Надії Савченко, яка днями вартувала під Міністерством оборони, щоб зустрітися з міністром і отримати дозвіл вчитися на льотчицю. «Але це було до війни. Зараз зовсім інша історія. Вже безліч жінок пройшли фронт, отримали і поранення, і контузії, і досвід. І разом з тим, вони – «кухарки», – зауважує Берлінська.

Дослідження «Невидимий батальйон» викрило низку проблем, про які, як кажуть соціологи, зазвичай не згадують у медіа. Наприклад, відсутність форми потрібного розміру та гінекологічного обслуговування, посттравматичний синдром і проблеми реінтеграції. Кілька жінок в інтерв'ю розповіли, що соціальні служби намагалися забрати їхніх дітей, поки вони перебували в зоні бойових дій.

На запитання «Чи стане армія ефективнішою за участі жінок?» більшість опитаних відповіли ствердно. Жінки часто кращі снайпери або медики через розвиненішу дрібну моторику, окрім того, вони більш дисципліновані і менш схильні до алкоголізму. Утім, деякі чоловіки, відповідаючи на це запитання, визнають, що мають позитивні приклади участі жінок у воєнних діях, однак все одно переконані, що війна – «не жіноча справа». Стереотипи поширені й серед самих жінок: багато з них вважають, що виконують другорядні завдання порівняно з тими, що виконують чоловіки.

Соціолог та автор дослідження Тамара Марценюк упевнена, що в сучасному суспільстві жінки самі мають право обирати: варити борщ чи гинути на барикадах. «Патерналізм з боку держави вважається доволі застарілим. Багато міжнародних документів декларують зміну бачення ролі жінок не лише як жертв конфлікту, але й як повноправних учасниць розв'язання конфліктів на рівні з чоловіками», – каже вона.

Тамара Марценюк каже, що причина заборони для жінок широкого переліку посад зумовлена тим, що Збройні сили – це частина ринку праці. А отже, права жінок там визначені також трудовим законодавством. У них із радянських часів прописані певні норми, що регламентують жіночу працю: наприклад, обмеження ваги, яку може піднімати жінка, або заборона керувати певними транспортними засобами.

Полковник Віталій Голота, начальник відділу військово-соціальної роботи Головного управління з роботи з особовим складом ЗСУ, пояснює: керівні посади жінки не можуть обіймати через те, що мають менше можливостей для навчання військовим спеціальностям. Тим часом заборонені посади – це проблема законодавчої бази. Багато пропозицій ЗСУ щодо розширення цих посад відкинуло Міністерство соціальної політики, каже Віталій Голота.

Утім, дискримінаційним цей перелік полковник не вважає. І додає, що, наприклад, посада водія в армії передбачає не лише керування автомобілем. «До обов'язків водія – це незрозуміло цивільній людні – входять маскування цього транспортного засобу, ремонт тощо. Жінка, при всій повазі, іноді може фізично не впоратись», – каже Голота.

Сьогодні у складі Збройних сил служать 14,5 тисяч жінок, майже 2 тисячі з них – офіцери, 35 із яких обіймають керівні посади у Міністерстві оборони, Генеральному штабі, різних видах Збройних сил України. 938 жінок мають статус учасника бойових дій.

Edmonton commemorates Holodomor

Cont. from P. 1

Mennonites and other religious leaders, and some politicians including members of the Saskatchewan legislature and Labour M.P. Humpfrey Mitchel, the Canadian government could not be convinced to intervene.

"Similar requests to then U.S. President Roosevelt received the appalling response that as the conditions suffered in Ukraine do not appear to directly affect American citizens or interests the US was no in a position to take action. This despite numerous news articles published by American and other western journalists testifying to their own first- hand accounts witnessing the atrocities.

"Similar pleas to the League of Nation to assist were similarly thwarted.

"As Canadians, we share responsibility in demanding that our governments formally recognize and speak against atrocities and to take action to intervene to prevent or respond to potential genocides. As an elected legislator I take very seriously my duty to hold the government accountable for delivering on these international duties and commitments, including the Duty to Intervene," she stated.

Noting that both the Canadian Parliament and the Alberta Legislature have recognized the Holodomor as a genocide, due largely to the efforts of the UCC and its local affiliates, Duncan said "the need continues to educate Canadians and others about the travesty of the Holodomor.

She noted that In 2007, Alberta Education introduced a specific component on genocide to the grade 11 curriculum and have since produced educational materials for teachers including a video.

Speaking on behalf of the Government of Canada, Edmonton Centre MP Randy Boissonnault noted that the Ukrainian genocide began in 1929 "with the massive waves of deadly deportations of Ukraine's most successful farmers, as well as the deportations and executions of Ukraine's religious, intellectual and cultural leaders, culminating in the devastating forced famine that killed millions more innocent individuals."

"By June 1933, at the height of the famine, people in Ukraine are dying at the rate of 30,000 a day, nearly a third of them are children under 10," he noted.

"In a democratic society, the first responsibility of a national government is the protection from violence and the security of all citizens. Then, the responsibility is to ensure that all have the opportunity to live their lives in peace and in prosperity.

"We stand here today to defend the democratic principles of liberty, of security of the person of the right to work and the freedom of assembly... Each citizen has a duty to ensure that we protect and enhance our collective values so that on our own home soil and abroad we can give voices to the voiceless.

"We remain vigilant so that no Holodomor may occur here or abroad again," added Boissonnault.

Representing the Government of Alberta, Stony Plain MLA Erin Babcock stated: "It is painfully clear that the Ukrainian famine was not due to drought, pestilence or natural disaster but rather an intentional attack by Joseph Stalin and his dictatorial regime on the Ukrainian peasant population of Soviet Ukraine."

Linda Duncan

She stressed the need to maintain vigilance so that "such atrocities never happen again."

"We must continually promote the acceptance of all people and all cultures.

"We must oppose all crimes against humanity and we must honour the memory of those who suffered and died by reaffirming our vigilance against racism, violence, hatred and persecution.

"May their memory live forever, and may such tragedy never be repeated," said Babcock.

City Councillor Dave Loken, whose grandparents came from Ukraine, said the Holodomor was a deliberate famine "devised to destroy the Ukrainian people's aspirations for a free and independent Ukraine."

"The famine has been called a silent massacre and it's a trauma that left a deep and lasting wound," he stated.

Loken noted that the Ukrainian community has deep roots in the city.

"While we share in the many cultural, social and economic contributions of our Ukrainian heritage, we also share in the enduring pain of the Holodomor.

"With Ukraine's security and independence once again threatened, it's a reminder to all of us of the vital need to defend out human rights and civil liberties," he added.

In his opening address UCC Edmonton President Serhiy Kostyuk noted that a Russian court recently labeled Raphael Lemkin, author of the United Nations definition of the term genocide, who called the Holodomor "the classic example of Soviet genocide" an "extremist".

He focused on the theme of evil, comparing the evil of the perpetrators of the Holodomor with that of the current terrorists occupying the Donbas, who are destroying monuments to the victims.

"When we forgive evil, when we close our eyes, it will return to us. So we pray for those millions of people who died in Ukraine. They are waiting for us in heaven and they will pray for us in the invisible world and today we remember their lives and their deaths," said Kostyuk.

Master of Ceremonies Taras Podilsky noted that: "Our presence here and in many cities worldwide attests to the fact the world will not forget the innocent victims of the Holodomor genocide and it also shows our resolve to never allow this kind of crime to be repeated in Ukraine or anywhere in our global family."

The commemoration ceremony began with a Prayer Service conducted by 13 members of the local clergy led by His Grace Ilarion, Bishop of Edmonton and the Western Eparchy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and Very. Reverend Father Stephan Wojcichowsky, Chancellor Vicar General, Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton.

Responses were sung by the Verkhovyna choir, who were joined on the steps by members of the youth groups CYM, PLAST, as well as students from Ridna Shkola, and the Ivan Franko School along with flag bearers representing the various Ukrainian organizations of Edmonton.

Holodomor survivor Leonid Korownyk reciting two poems he had written about the Holodomor especially for this year's ceremony – one in English and one in Ukrainian.

Following the ceremony, participants proceeded to the Holodomor monument in front of City Hall to lay wreaths.

Erected in 1983, Edmonton's monument was the first one in the world to commemorate the victims.

PHOTOS – MARCO LEVYTSKY

Holodomor Memorial Service

This icon was used for the Memorial Card of Sister Theodosia Papirnik (March 13, 1947 – April 14, 2015). We are reprinting it in her honour.

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ССУК - це добродійна, громадська установа, яка постачає суспільні послуги серед української громади

UCSS - a non-profit organization, responding to the needs and interest of the Ukrainian Community

UCSS is providing various services:
- counselling and advice
- information, referral
- translation and interpretation
- assistance to seniors and new immigrants
- parcels and money delivered to Ukraine

Мітинг-реквієм на центральній площі Лісабону

Португальська діаспора вшанувала пам'ять Голодомору

В усіх українських суботніх школах в Португалії в цей день, 28 листопада, пройшли тематичні уроки та хвилини мовчання в рамках світової акції "Запали свічку! Не будь байдужий!".

А на центральній площі Лісабону о 20:00 розпочався багатолюдний мітинг-реквієм, який продовжився Мирною ходою до церкви Святого Антонія, де отець Микола Ярема (ЧСВВ) відправив панахиду за невинно загиблими під час страшних мордувань і переслідувань українців у часи комуністичного режиму.

На мітингу-реквіємі виступали і: Тимчасовий повірений у справах України в Португалії Леонід Трет'як, професор Лісабонського університету, політик Аліна Холл, заступник голови Ради Спілки Українців Португалії (СУП) Микола Чабан, заступник голови лісабонського осередку СУП Юрій Білінський, голова Ради СУП Павло Садоха. Вони у своїх промовах закликали українців продовжувати поширювати інформацію про страшні Голодомори в Україні серед португальців з метою добитися визнання парламентом Португалії Голодомору 1932-1933 років актом Геноциду проти українців (як відомо, у 2010 році соціалістична більшість у португальському парламенті відхилила таке прохання українців, посилаючись на недостатність інформаці і доказів).

Також, відома поетеса Оксана Максимишин-Корабель зворушила присутніх своїм новим твором, присвяченим пам'яті жертв Голодоморів, "Лише одна свіча горить цілу ніч".

Приємно було чути від португальців та випадкових туристів слова підтримки Україні під час Мирної ходи центральними вулицями старого Лісабону.

Та нажаль, цього разу не обійшлося без прикрого інценденту – під час панахиди в церкві Святого Антонія зайшла якась російськомовна молода пані і образила присутніх через українську символіку і мету зібрання. Напевне, це ще раз символічно доводить, що в свідомості росіян лежить відповідальність за цей і багато інших злочинів проти українців!

Голова Спілки українців Португалії, Павло Садоха

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* * *

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- 2 бльоки від комплексу крамниць
- Близько автобусової лінії
- Каплиця в будинку
- Приміщення для відвідин
- Клюб сеньйорів
- Суспільні програми

Rent: 30% of Total Income
Рент: 30% від цілої платні

Dnipro-Selo Housing Society
Marlene Krokosh - Administrator

Дніпро–Село Житлове Товариство
Марлін Крокош – Адміністратор

Маккейн докладатиме усіх зусиль для надання США оборонної зброї Україні

(Голос Америки)—Посол України в США Валерій Чалий провів зустріч з головою Комітету з питань збройних сил Сенату Конгресу США, членом Сенатського українського корпусу Джоном Маккейном. Про зустріч, яка відбулася в п'ятницю 4-го грудня, повідомило посольство України у Вашингтоні.

Як зазначається у повідомленні, посол України подякував американському сенаторові за постійну і всебічну особисту підтримку України, зокрема на законодавчому рівні, підкресливши, що для перемоги у протистоянні з Росією Україна потребує не лише сильної економіки й дипломатії, а й потужної армії.

У свою чергу сенатор Маккейн запевнив, що залишається одним із найбільших друзів України та продовжуватиме докладати усіх зусиль для надання Сполученими Штатами ефективної підтримки Україні, у тому числі оборонної зброї для захисту від російської військової агресії, йдеться у повідомлення посольства.

На завершення зустрічі Джон Маккейн запросив Валерія Чалого спільно відвідати південно-західний штат Аризона, який він представляє у Сенаті.

Посол України вручив сенаторові книгу «Euromaidan – History in the Making», присвячену українській Революції гідності 2013-2014 років.

Ex-FSB officer says Russia involved in London, Paris attacks, ISIS

(UNIAN)—The TSN.Tyzhden weekly TV program has broadcast an interview with former Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) officer, which may trigger a real spy scandal. It has been speculated for long that the Kremlin's puppeteers are behind terrorist attacks in Europe and the United States, but no confirmation has been presented. The experienced agent, former FSB officer specializing in terrorist organizations and counter-terrorism is now giving his testimony.

Such an interview is an extremely dangerous step for the FSB agent with high-level access, alias Yevgeniy, but he has decided to break with the past. The reason why he fled Russia is not that ideological, it is rather personal, according to TSN.Tyzhden.

Ukrainian experts have checked his statements with the use of a polygraph twice, and the results are clear: everything he tells the journalist is true. Yevgeniy claims that radical Islamist groups are staffed with Russian agents and Moscow has a real impact on their activity.

"Being guided by good intentions, human rights activists from Europe would help the people being persecuted in their country to flee. Among them were infiltrators with ready documents and a made-up legend. They would actively infiltrate into Muslim communities. With the support of the security services, they made financial donations, thus acquiring prestige and moving up the hierarchy," Yevgeniy tells TSN journalist Andriy Tsaplienko.

- And how was the legend created?

- A certain person was given a package of documents, namely a travel passport, documents confirming that their relatives were being persecuted, mentioning cases opened by the FSB or the Interior Ministry in Chechnya and Dagestan, newspaper clippings about the person's involvement in illegal armed groups, about the person being persecuted. Then the individual was monitored abroad until infiltration. Nobody contacted the person for about a year. After some time passed, someone, for example, from the Chechen elders who had connections with the FSB and at the same time with the diaspora abroad got into contact with the individual. Further, at this stage, financial support arrived – first they gave thousands of dollars, then tens of thousands of dollars to support the family, set up a business, cover espionage activity.

According to Yevgeniy, Russian agents were a tool of terrorist attacks in Europe. Their task was to undermine the situation and create the so-called multicultural conflict. Starting from 2009, England has seen several riots between local radicals and Muslims every year. Three people died in such riots in 2011.

- Was the FSB behind the London riots?

- If you mean the riots in 2009, 2010 and 2011 when there was the looting of shops – it was executed in accordance with the plans approved by the FSB and the SVR (Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation) long ago.

- And how was it exacerbated?

- It was done through those who received the money, they shared it to fuel the situation, just to destabilize it.

- Is there any proof which suggests that the Russian special services were involved in the terrorist attacks on Paris, or at least they knew about them in advance?

- Enjoying their capabilities in the European-based Muslim communities, they could not but know that the terrorist acts were being prepared. They knew but did not share...

- Is it complicity?

- It is complicity in acts of terrorism. And the complicity could be direct or indirect. By analyzing their connections, one, of course, will be able to see the ties leading to Russia. Primarily Russia could benefit from this, and the Russian security services had all the possibilities to organize this.

- Can you name any Russian agents in the Muslim structures, give the names of the people who get money to destabilize the situation from time to time?

- A son and two nephews of Hezbollah's security chief. Once they lived in Moscow, now they're residing in Europe, and the SVR manages the Arab-Lebanese cell through them.

TSN found out those were the relatives of Abdul Hadi Hamadi, who heads Hezbollah's counter-intelligence unit. By the way, since 2006, Moscow no longer considers this group to be a terrorist organization. Yevgeniy claims that Moscow is actively involved in explicitly terrorist groups against which Russia is supposedly waging war, namely the "Islamic State," or ISIS.

- Can one claim that Russia, the Russian special services are involved in the creation of ISIS?

- Partly. As is in the situation with [the attacks on] Paris, they virtually were accomplices in this.

After the split of the Al-Qaeda terrorist organization, former officers of the Iraqi army and Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party members started creating the ISIS. All of them graduated from Moscow-based educational institutions.

"Definitely, and I know that exactly, the Russian special services believed that if a terrorist organization was set up as an alternative to Al-Qaeda and it created problems for the United States as Donbas does for Ukraine now, it would be quite good," Yevgeniy said.

The former FSB officer's knowledge of how Russian agents work jointly with Islamic radicals and Donbas militants is invaluable for Ukraine. And he also knows for sure that the FSB's devil is not so black as it is painted. So far, there is no way back home for him. "But this won't last long. After all, it's the giant with feet of clay," he added.

Putin orders government to sue Ukraine

(RFE.RL)—Russian President Vladimir Putin has instructed the Finance Ministry to take Ukraine to court if the country defaults on its $3 billion debt to Moscow.

"Go ahead, take it to court," Putin told Finance Minister Anton Siluanov at a government meeting on December 9.

"If Russia sues Ukraine, we are ready fight Russia in court," Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said later.

The comments come a day after the International Monetary Fund revised its policy, allowing the Washington-based institution to continue lending to countries that fail to pay debts held by other countries.

That means financial aid to Ukraine may continue if the country doesn't repay the $3 billion Eurobond Russia bought in December 2013.

Last month, Moscow offered to restructure the bond, which matures on December 20, by spreading out payments over three years.

But Ukraine wants the bond to be restructured under an agreement reached with its commercial creditors that would write down the principal of the debt.

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Holodomor repercussions reverberate today

On November 28, people around the world commemorated the Holodomor – the genocidal famine by which Soviet Dictator Joseph Stalin planned to exterminate the Ukrainians as a nation.

The Holodomor was geographically focused for political ends. It stopped precisely at the Ukrainian-Russian ethnographic border. The borders of Ukraine were strictly patrolled by the military to prevent starving Ukrainians from crossing into Russia in search of bread.

At the height of the Holodomor Ukrainian villagers were dying at the rate of 25,000 per day or 1,000 per hour or 17 per minute. Children comprised one-third of the Holodomor victims in Ukraine.

The Soviet Government refused to acknowledge to the international community the starvation in Ukraine and turned down the assistance offered by various countries and international relief organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross. Instead it dumped 1.7 million tons of grain on the Western markets, while the people slowly starved to death.

How many people perished? No one knows. Initial estimates put the death toll at between 7 and 10 million. Today most academics have lowered the figure to around 4 million, citing various demographic studies.

But on what basis can demographic studies be made? Unlike the Nazis, who kept meticulous records of their genocide, the Soviets deliberately covered up the Holodomor figures. When the results of the 1937 Soviet census were compiled, they showed such a huge loss of population that Stalin immediately ordered the data destroyed and sent all its organizers to the Gulag as saboteurs. Then, a subsequent census in 1939 was adjusted so that the figures conformed to Stalin's wishes.

Therefore, it is impossible to determine an accurate demographic figure of the Holodomor victims because, in order to produce an accurate demographic figure, one must have accurate demographic statistics to begin with. Since the only demographic statistics that could have provided an accurate base were destroyed and the census takers exterminated, any so-called study is based purely on conjecture.

But does it really matter whether it was 4 million or 10 million? Millions were starved to death in a man-made famine and what is incontestable is that this was a genocide perpetrated against the Ukrainian nation. Rafael Lemkin the Jewish scholar who authored the United Nations definition of genocide, called the Holodomor a classic Soviet genocide. As he noted, Stalin first went after the head – the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Then he went after the heart – the Ukrainian Church. And then the body – namely the peasants themselves.

He then transferred millions of ethnic Russian to repopulate the regions that were now deserted after the forced starvation of millions of ethnic Ukrainians. And those Ukrainians who survived were so traumatized both by what they endured and by the fact that even to talk about this horrendous genocide was a crime, they themselves became russified.

Thus the repercussions of the Holodomor reverberate today. It is because of the Holodomor that Russian Dictator Vladimir Putin now lays claim to Eastern Ukraine and it is the repercussions of this genocide that give his terrorist proxies the false claim to this land.

That is why Russia continues to deny the Holodomor and why it is so important for the world to acknowledge it as the genocide it was.

One reason is to ensure that such atrocities never be allowed to happen again. But another is to do whatever is necessary to prevent the perpetrators of this genocide to profit from it.

Putin's aggression against the people of Ukraine is nothing but a continuation of Stalin's genocide against the people of Ukraine.

And that makes this atrocity doubly horrendous.

Ukraine? What Ukraine?

By Brian Whitmore

(RFE/RL)—What Vladimir Putin didn't say may be just as important as what he did say.

In a one-hour speech to a joint session of the Russian parliament, Vladimir Putin did not utter the word "Ukraine" once.

He didn't attack the authorities in Kyiv. He didn't talk about the plight of Russian-speakers in Ukraine. He didn't mention the conflict in Donbas. He did mention Crimea, but only in passing.

This is significant. Along with his live call-in program and his end-of-year press conference, Putin's annual state-of-the-nation address is one of the Kremlin leader's big set pieces.

He has the nation's — and much of the world's — attention. It's a valuable opportunity to set an agenda, frame the debate, and lay down markers.

And he chose not to talk — at all — about a conflict that has consumed the country and dominated Russia's relations with the West and much of the outside world for the better part of two years.

Just for for a bit of perspective, in his 2014 state-of-the-nation speech, Putin mentioned Ukraine 18 times, including four references in the first five minutes.

Moscow's attention, of course, is elsewhere at the moment.

Russia has a new war in Syria where it is trying to prop up its ally, Bashar al-Assad, while trying — and largely failing — to convince the world that it is fighting Islamic State militants.

And the Turkish air force's downing of a Russian SU-24 warplane on November 24 has focused much of the Kremlin's ire on Ankara.

Putin may not have mentioned Ukraine in this year's speech, but he referred to Turkey seven times, Syria eight times, and terrorism 24 times.

Moscow's attention has shifted away from Ukraine because it is losing the conflict in Donbas and losing it decisively.

Putin's Plan A in Donbas, the seizure of what his ideologists call Novorossia — the strip of land from Kharkiv in the north to Odesa in the south — was an abject failure.

Most of Ukraine's Russian speakers prefer being an ethnic and linguistic minority in a democracy to being a majority in a kleptocratic autocracy.

And Putin's Plan B, forcing Ukraine to integrate separatist-held territories in the east on Moscow's terms — as a Trojan horse that can destabilize the country — is also failing.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, who was dealt a terrible hand with the Minsk cease-fire, has played it masterfully.

But the underlying reason Ukraine has faded from the radar — and from Putin's big speech — is the underlying logic of policymaking in Moscow.

In a clever piece for the Atlantic Council, Andrew Kornbluth wrote that the Putin regime is not so much a rogue state as a "troll state" that aims to "needle the West and cheer Russians," while at the same time seeking to advance the interests of the Kremlin's ruling clique.

"By tormenting others, trolls create the illusion of action and assuage their own nagging feelings of powerlessness. Likewise, Putin's military adventures in Ukraine and Syria have been remarkably successful at distracting attention from the worsening decay of Russia's human and economic capital," Kornbluth wrote.

"To sustain their short attention spans, trolls must constantly find new and varied ways to bait their opponents. Hence the dizzying pivot from promoting the so-called 'People's Republics' of Donetsk and Luhansk, which were banished from the headlines almost overnight, to heralding the creation of an 'anti-terrorist coalition' in Syria."

But while a foreign policy of trolling can often wrongfoot opponents, it has its limits.

"Trolling can unintentionally escalate into life-or-death confrontation, a risk that was made real when, after months of Russian incursions into foreign airspace from the Baltics to Japan, Turkey shot down a Russian bomber passing over its territory," Kornbluth wrote.

And Russia's trolling adventure in Ukraine has alienated it from the West, led to crippling sanctions, and lost it any vestiges of goodwill in Kyiv, perhaps for generations.

It's no wonder that Putin doesn't want to talk about that.

Commemorating Stalin's Holodomor

By Taras Kuzio

Last month as Russian President Vladimir Putin continued his aggression against Ukraine, Ukrainians around the world commemorated the terror-famine of 1932-33. The murder of upwards of 5 million people in Ukraine by Stalin's Communist regime, known as the Holodomor, came about from forced collectivization of agriculture where starving peasants were denied the food that was exported for hard currency.

The Holodomor targeted Ukrainian national identity that had flowered during the 1920s and sought to crush widespread anti-Soviet feelings in Ukraine. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev recalled during his famous 1956 speech that Stalin had wanted to deport all Ukrainians after World War II but there were too many of them, a fate that befell the fewer in number Crimean Tatars who were deported in 1944 and are today living under Russian occupation.

The Holodomor set the stage for mass repression, the Great Terror, Katyn massacre and the construction of the world's largest concentration camp system that came to be known as the Gulag Archipelago. These crimes were followed by Nazi occupation and further genocide resulting in the deaths of 15-20 million people in Ukraine in 1933-1945, a demographic disaster that Ukraine has yet to recover from. Entire regions of depopulated eastern and southern Ukraine were repopulated by Russian immigrants changing the ethnic and linguistic identity of the region that had similar consequences to the Irish famine in the 1840s and 1850s which destroyed the Irish language.

Over the last 3 decades, Ukrainians in Canada and Ukraine have honoured the millions of people in Ukraine who were murdered by Stalin and his henchmen criminals. Beginning with the publication of historian Robert Conquest's acclaimed book Harvest of Sorrow and the documentary Harvest of Despair produced by Ukrainian-Canadians, there has been path breaking research, a wide variety of publications and education of their citizens and the world about Stalinism and the evils of the Soviet Communist system.

In Toronto, last month's commemoration began with the Annual Holodomor Lecture given by well-known and acclaimed Yale University Professor Timothy Snyder who is the author of five award-winning books, including Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin and Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning. The first chapter of Bloodlands is devoted to the Holodomor as an act of genocide committed by Stalin against Ukrainians where Snyder writes, 'No European country was subject to such intense colonization as Ukraine, and no European country suffered more.'

In contrast to Ukraine, Vladimir Putin has set a process of re-Stalinization in motion in Russia where the murder of millions of innocent victims is ignored and Stalin is praised as an economic 'modernizer,' a great war time leader who transformed the USSR into a nuclear superpower. Russia's camps no longer commemorate the millions who perished there but in a grotesque manner glorify the camp guards themselves.

Any decent human being would be shocked at Russia's re-Stalinization and would strive to ensure their country remained outside Putin's grip, as millions of Ukrainians demonstrated during the Euromaidan. In militarily attacking Ukraine to keep the country within Russia's sphere of influence, President Putin is seeking to impose his country's vision of Stalin and the hiding of his crimes. Russian leaders have on many occasions vehemently opposed Ukraine's de-Stalinization and demanded that it follow Russian portrayals of the Soviet Union as a great country. Little wonder that large portraits of Stalin hang in Donetsk, capitol of Putin's proxy separatist enclaves in the Donbas region of eastern Ukraine.

Among the many other commemorative events on the Holodomor in Canada, there was a mobile classroom RV constructed for the Holodomor National Awareness Tour intended for high schools in Ontario and Canada (http://www.holodomortour.ca), a project generously funded by grants from the Federal and Ontario Governments as well as donations by Ukrainian Canadian philanthropists. Another notable commemoration was being organized by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress on Saturday, 28 November 15 at St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Mississauga.

The national histories we chose to educate our children, the leaders that we praise and whether we denounce or hide their crimes against humanity reflect our political instincts. Stalin and Adolf Hitler are the

Cont. on P. 7

Allying with Putin against ISIS would be a devil's bargain

By Oleksandr Turchynov,
The Washington Post, December 3, 2015

Winston Churchill was under no illusions about his wartime alliance with Joseph Stalin. "If Hitler invaded hell, I would make at least a favorable reference to the devil in the House of Commons," he remarked to an aide. This was not a bond forged in friendship and trust. It was a temporary partnership of necessity in the face of a common enemy. As soon as Nazi Germany was defeated, the reality of Stalin's intentions became clear. Promises to hold free elections in the countries under Soviet occupation were broken, and the West spent the next 40 years trying to contain the threat the Soviet Union posed.

This needs to be kept in mind as we contemplate events in Syria. In the aftermath of the horrific terrorist attacks in Paris and the bombing of a Russian plane over the Sinai, it is understandable that Western governments should want to form the broadest possible international coalition, including with Russia, to defeat those responsible. But shared grief is not the same as shared interests. Cooperation with Russia in the fight against the Islamic State needs to be carefully weighed against several bigger foreign policy issues.

The areas where Russia's interests in Syria conflict with those of the West remain at least as significant as those where they overlap. Whereas the West's priority is destroying the Islamic State, Russia's primary aim is to keep the Bashar al-Assad regime in power. So far, a large majority of Russian airstrikes in Syria have been directed against non-Islamic State targets, including moderate groups such as the Western-backed Free Syrian Army that are helping fight the terrorist group on the ground. These strikes have also exacerbated the flow of Syrian refugees toward Europe.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has direct interests in Syria as a regional ally, a market for Russian military exports and a base for the Russian navy's Mediterranean fleet. But his approach is influenced by wider considerations, one of which is to prevent another authoritarian regime from succumbing to the demands of its people. As we well know in Ukraine, Putin is determined to resist the tide of global democratic change and willing to use violence against other countries to stop it. He sees freedom as a threat to his own hold on power and an indication of advancing Western influence. Russian policy in Syria is framed by an attitude of strategic hostility toward the West and its values.

While the Kremlin pretends to be fighting terrorism in Syria, Russia itself merits designation as a state sponsor of terrorism. Its aggression against Ukraine has cost more than 8,000 lives, including the indiscriminate shelling of civilian areas and the murder of political opponents carried out by its special forces and Russian-sponsored terrorists. It was a Russian-supplied Buk missile that reportedly shot down Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 in July of last year, resulting in the loss of 298 innocent lives. More than 1.5 million people in Ukraine have been internally displaced as a result of illegal Russian aggression. The Russian state has shown itself willing to carry out the assassination of regime critics, both at home and abroad, using terrorist methods.

Yet none of this will prevent Russia from trying to extract advantage from the war in Syria. Putin is a master of tactical opportunism, and in the past two weeks Russian jets in Syria have been dropping bombs inscribed with the message "For Paris" in a gesture of apparent solidarity. Positioned as a friend of the West in its fight against terrorism, Putin hopes to secure the relationship he has always wanted — one that sets aside international law and the rights of smaller nations in favor of great-power deal-making and the principle that might is right.

Russia has already invoked the grand alliance against Hitler as a precedent for fighting the Islamic State. Be in no doubt that it will also demand a new Yalta as the price of cooperation now. In his recent speech to the United Nations, Putin praised the post-World War II agreement that began the division of Europe by recognizing the territorial gains Stalin achieved under the Nazi-Soviet pact. The town of Yalta, of course, now lies in Russian-occupied Crimea as a poignant reminder that the past lives with us. All Putin needs is for the West to drop sanctions and accept his land grab in Ukraine for the circle to be complete.

The West needs to be hardheaded in its assessment of the risks involved in doing business with Russia over Syria and firm about the limits of any cooperation. Islamist terrorism is a major threat and has the capacity to cause death and suffering on a huge scale. It must be dealt with as a matter of urgent priority. Yet the greatest long-term threats to a peaceful and liberal world order remain Russian terrorism and the determination of a revanchist Kremlin to impose a new sphere of influence and systematically try to destabilize its neighborhood, not only in Ukraine but also in the Caucasus, the Baltic States, Poland and the Balkans. The civilized world must defeat terrorism, not selectively but in all forms and on all fronts.

Oleksandr Turchynov is secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine.

Ukraine takes two steps forward on corruption fight

By Melinda Haring

(Atlantic Council)—On November 30, Ukraine took two steps forward in its fight against corruption. Member of Parliament Mykola Martynenko resigned his position, and Nazar Kholodnytsky was appointed the nation's top anticorruption prosecutor.

Martynenko was the deputy head of Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk's People's Front party and the head of parliament's energy and fuel committee. According to Serhiy Leshchenko, an investigative journalist and member of parliament, Martynenko was "one of the most influential people in Ukrainian politics," who "used his position in parliament for his personal enrichment."

On November 26, Leshchenko published documents from Swiss investigators outlining corruption allegations against Martynenko. The documents accuse Martynenko of accepting bribes worth 30 million Swiss francs (approximately US$29 million) from the Czech-based engineering firm Skoda in exchange for a contract to supply equipment to the state-owned nuclear power firm Energoatom.

Martynenko denied the accusations, telling the Kyiv Post that "as far as the documents published by Leshchenko are concerned, there is no confirmation of their authenticity."

Geoffrey Pyatt, US ambassador to Ukraine, called Martynenko's resignation "another sign of a changing Ukraine."

"Public officials must be accountable to the people they serve. No room for corruption, cronyism," Pyatt wrote on Twitter.

Ukrainian civil society and the West had been pressing Kyiv to establish an independent anticorruption body. In July, a new law authorized the Prosecutor General's Office and parliament to appoint a top anticorruption prosecutor. On November 30, the Prosecutor General finally did.

"Very big day yesterday in Ukraine's war against corruption. Appointment of new anti-corruption prosecutor marks historic opportunity," Pyatt wrote on December 1.

Kholodnytsky, 30, will fill the post. Born in Lviv, he holds a master's degree in law from Lviv National University and has a reputation for completing criminal cases and resisting political pressure. Since December 2014, Kholodnytsky has been investigating the Kremlin's crimes in Crimea as the first deputy prosecutor of Crimea.

"Kholodnytsky has the advantage of being very young and also of having some experience in procuratorial structures. So, young enough not to have been fully absorbed by the system but with the benefit of some practical legal experience," Atlantic Council Nonresident Senior Fellow Adrian Karatnycky said.

On November 27, a commission appointed by Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin and the Ukrainian parliament submitted a list of candidates for the job that included two people—Kholodnytsky and Lviv prosecutor Maxim Hryshchuk.

Two candidates who were seen as favorites—deputy prosecutor generals Vitaly Kasko and Roman Hovda—didn't make the short list. Ukrainian anticorruption activists and some representatives of the United States and the EU had backed Kasko.

Shokin's representatives lobbied the commission to nominate Hovda, although civil society strongly resisted and prevailed. Critics regarded him as a defender of the old system and a Shokin protégée. In fact, sacking Shokin has been a major demand of civil society for months.

"Kholodnytsky will be judged by his results," Vitaly Shabunin, a member of the commission and head of the Anti-Corruption Action Center's management board, told the Kyiv Post. "He's not explicitly dependent on the Prosecutor General's Office or the presidential administration. Now he's independent, but let's see what will happen later."

Leshchenko laid out the demands of the job. "He has to be independent, not loyal. He has to be very well paid to avoid any conflict of interest."

Above all, Leshchenko cautions the new anticorruption prosecutor to remember that "he was hired by society and society is his employee. Society has a strong demand to fight corruption in Ukraine."

Melinda Haring is editor of the Ukraine Alert at the Atlantic Council.

Commemorating Stalin's Holodomor

Cont. from P. 6

antithesis of the European democracy that Ukraine is seeking to build while Stalin is central to Putin's mythology of the 'Great Patriotic War' and his vision of a resurgent Russian great power. The biggest collaborator in World War II let us recall was Stalin who aligned with Hitler from 1939-1941.

Ukraine commemorates the millions of innocent victims of the Holodomor and Stalin's crimes while Russia seeks to deny their existence. Today, 16 Western countries recognize the Holodomor as a genocide against the Ukrainian people, while Russia continues its re-Stalinization and many Russians see Stalin as a positive historical figure. Canada and Europe stand in solidarity with Ukraine this month as it commemorates the Holodomor genocide.

Taras Kuzio is a Senior Fellow at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta and his recently published book is called Ukraine. Democratization and the New Russian Imperialism (Praeger).

Trudeau issues Holodomor statement

(UkrNews)—The following statement was issued by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on November 28.

"One of the darkest chapters of human history, the Holodomor, occurred over eighty years ago between 1932 and 1933. The Holodomor was the systemic and horrific genocide of millions of Ukrainians by a totalitarian Soviet regime. Children, women, and men were starved and executed for nothing more than trying to speak their language, maintain their culture, keep their land, and live in peace.

"While the Holodomor tried to break the Ukrainian people, they endured, persevered, and ultimately won their independence. Their descendants continue to make immeasurable contributions in countries around the world – including right here in Canada.

"Today, we stand with Ukrainians in denouncing the historical atrocities committed against them, and in support of their enduring right to self-determination, freedom, and democracy. To this end, the Government of Canada stands firmly against Russia's ongoing military aggression in Ukraine. We believe that, along with the international community, Canada can play an important part in bringing this conflict to an end. As a country, we also remain committed to helping rebuild the democratic, economic, and security institutions that will help Ukraine flourish once more.

"On this sombre anniversary, we pause to remember the victims, families, and communities who suffered as a result of the Holodomor, and we strengthen our resolve to continue promoting and upholding basic freedoms, rights, and dignity to help ensure that atrocities like this never happen again."

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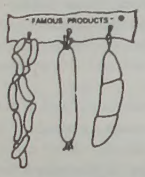

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Гуманітарний фронт

Як працюють міжнародні організації в окупації?

Яна Полянська, *Радіо Свобода*

«Люди в біді» – одна з дуже небагатьох міжнародних організацій, яким вдалось закріпитися на окупованих територіях України для надання людям гуманітарної допомоги. Навесні лідери бойовиків вислали з підконтрольної їм частини Донбасу багатьох правозахисників. Утім, «Люди в біді» вже кілька разів домагались від тих, хто називає себе керівниками «ЛНР» та «ДНР», дозволу на роботу. Зараз представники місії мають офіси у звільненому Слов'янську і в окупованому Донецьку. Утім, ще залишається багато «сірих плям» біля лінії фронту, де люди не мають базового – їжі та ліків, кажуть в організації.

За 80 кілометрів від фронту, у звільненому Слов'янську, базується головний український офіс чеської неурядової організації «Люди в біді». Координатор місії в Україні Владіслав Вік розповідає, що навіть там, де війна формально закінчилась, людям і далі потрібна допомога. Бракує основного: їжі, одягу, грошей і будівельних матеріалів для відновлення зруйнованих стін та дахів будинків. Українцям, які втекли від війни подалі від лінії зіткнення, передають уже продуктові талони – так є більше впевненості, що вони отримають саме той товар, якого бракує, каже Вік. Найбільше уваги – до вимушених переселенців, додає він.

Найскладніша робота, утім, на окупованих територіях – там залишається багато тих, кому бракує елементарного: хліба та ліків. Вік розповідає, що зараз у Донецьку працює офіс «Люди в біді».

«У нашому випадку процес отримання «акредитації» був довгим. Маємо координувати роботу з місцевою «владою» «ДНР» та «ЛНР», – говорить представник організації.

Спершу організація вирішила оформити «пробну акредитацію», лише на тиждень, аби зрозуміти, чи вдасться співпрацювати з окупаційною владою. А вже на початку жовтня цього року, після марудного оформлення документів, організація отримала новий дозвіл на роботу і організувала в Донецьку офіс.

Вирішує, отримає та чи інша організація «акредитацію», чи ні, так званий «Центр управління відновленням «ДНР». Спершу, розповідає Владіслав Вік, слід подати заяву і чекати на відповідь.

«Люди в біді» працюють у Зайцевому Донецької області, що наразі підконтрольне бойовому угрупованню «ДНР»

«Але це важкі переговори, тому що не зовсім зрозуміло, хто чим опікується. Крім того, доводиться досить довго чекати, чи вдасться отримати. «Лікарям без кордонів», наприклад, взагалі не вдалося отримати акредитацію – їх звинуватили в збереженні психотропних речовин», – розповідає Вік.

А навесні угруповання «ДНР» видворило працівників «Міжнародного комітету порятунку» та закрило їхнє представництво за звинуваченням у шпигунстві.

Гуманітарна допомога має надходити всюди, незалежно від політичних поглядів людей, переконаний Владіслав Вік. Тож представники організації не розділяють для себе, по який бік блокпосту живуть українці. Зараз їхня мета – зменшити кількість «сірих зон», куди гуманітарна допомога не надходить у силу тих чи інших причин.

На початку гуманітарної кризи в Україні, їжу та одяг для постраждалих збирали саме в Чехії. Після чого відправляли конвоями до зони конфлікту. Утім, зараз в Чехії купується лише те, що не можна, або надто дорого, придбати вже на місці – ціни в Україні на більшість товарів нижчі. До того ж, не треба збирати документи для перевезення через кордон.

«Думаю, набагато розумніше купувати борошно в Україні, і тим самим підтримувати місцевих продавців, щоб вони мали роботу», – додає він.

На утримання двох офісів та великі об'єми допомоги потрібне фінансування. Основні джерела організації – Євросоюз та США.

«Об'єм гуманітарної допомоги – приблизно 20 мільйонів доларів на рік. Значний внесок робить і чеське суспільство. Солідарність чехів з Україною досить відчутна», – резюмує він.

ДОВІДКА: Чеська міжнародна громадська організація «Люди в біді» займається гуманітарною допомогою та сприяє підтримці прав людини в країнах, де точиться збройний конфлікт. Так, найбільша місія «Люди в біді» наразі перебуває в Туреччині, що приймає біженців із Сирії, та в Україні. Гуманітарні місії є також у Судані та Іраку. Організація почала надавати Україні гуманітарну допомогу на початку 2014 року, незабаром після початку революції. Тоді на Майдані створили шпиталь для медичної й психологічної допомоги постраждалим. Від початку конфлікту на Донбасі «Люди в біді» намагалась допомагати по обидва боки блокпостів: зараз має офіс і на окупованих, і на неокупованих територіях. Базовий офіс у Слов'янську, там працює 170 людей. У Криму організація «Люди в біді» гуманітарну діяльність не проводить.

Уряд США допомагатиме аграріям України з реформами

(Голос Америки)—Американський уряд продовжить допомагати Україні реформувати аграрний сектор. Про це «Голосу Америки» повідомив директор місії Агентства США з міжнародного розвитку (USAID) Джед Бартон. Фокус – на програмах зрошення земель та підтримці дрібних фермерських господарств.

За п'ять років існування програми «АгроІнвест», яку в Україні фінансує американський уряд, десятки пілотних проектів показали виробникам, як виходити на нові ринки і добиватися комерційного успіху.

Забуті рецепти народної кухні збирає по селах Вінниччини Асоціація традиційних продуктів з проекту «АгроІнвест». Організація відкриває ресторани, щоб дрібний виробник перетворив національні страви на комерційно успішний бренд.

А от прикарпатський кооператив «Липівський» об'єднує півтори сотні селян-одноосібників. «АгроІнвест» допоміг їм з технікою, і тепер продукція має товарний вигляд і краще продається.

«Ми вирощуємо екологічно чисту та натуральну продукцію. Ми порахували, десь на 25% прибутки підвищились», – розповідає голова кооперативу «Липівський» Василь Савіцький.

За 5 років діяльності в Україні проект «АгроІнвест» допоміг стати на ноги ягідному кооперативу на Тернопільщині, сімейній кролефермі у Черкасах, фермерам, які вирощують соняшник у Харківській області.

Фінансована американським урядом програма зосередилась на розвитку малого та середнього фермерства. Саме дрібним сільгоспвиробникам допомагали вийти на кредитні спілки, отримати елітні сорти насіння, вчили, як вести бізнес. Американці вірять, що майбутнє українського агросектора – за невеликими господарствами.

«Найбільш вагомо для мене – робота з виробниками і кооперативами, щоб допомогти їм вийти на нові ринки продовольства на місцевому і міжнародному рівні. Розробити для них необхідні системи сертифікації, щоб вони могли потрапити на ці ринки. Йдеться про відповідність європейським стандартам безпеки та якості продукції», – розповідає керівник проекту «АгроІнвест» Ерік Блайх.

Водночас, директор місії USAID Джед Бартон зауважує: «Я дуже пишаюся результатом. Ми бачимо прогрес у виробництві продукції сільського господарства: за той час, що ми тут працюємо, є кількаразове зростання. Але потенціал далі залишається нерозкритим, і ще багато треба зробити. І оскільки потенціал такий великий, а партнерство з українським урядом складається дуже успішно, то ми і далі будемо працювати в аграрному секторі України».

Як наголошує керівник USAID, завершення проекту «АгроІнвест» не означає, що Сполучені Штати не допомагатимуть реформувати сільгоспсектор. Українські урядовці підтверджують зацікавлення.

«Найголовніше те, що ми не бачимо зараз підстав для завершення цього проекту. Нам така співпраця потрібна, подобається, вона є необхідною для України. Потрібно сідати і спільно розробляти наступну дорожню карту на два роки, три роки, п'ять років, тому що багато що є робити спільно далі», – зазначив міністр аграрної політики та продовольства України Олексій Павленко.

Biden warns cost to Russia will rise if aggression continues

(RFE/RL)—U.S. Vice President Joe Biden has told Ukraine's parliament that Western pressure on Russia will increase if Moscow continues its aggression against Kyiv.

"If Russian aggression persists, the cost imposed on Moscow will continue to rise," Biden said on December 8 in a rare appearance by a top Western official before the Ukrainian parliament.

"The U.S. will maintain pressure until Moscow fulfills its [peace deal] commitments," he said. "Despite some de-escalation in violence, there can be no sanctions relief unless until Russia meets all of its commitments under the [February] Minsk agreements."

He also directly accused Moscow of sending troops to fight with pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine and trying to hide that action from the Russian public and the world.

"I don't think the Russian people understand fully what Putin is doing. That's why he spends so much time hiding at home the presence of troops here in your country," he told the Ukrainian lawmakers.

Biden was in Kyiv on his fourth visit since Moscow annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in March 2014 and gave its backing to pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine.

He told the parliament that "Russia is occupying sovereign Ukrainian territory" in Crimea and has violated international law by illegally seizing the Ukrainian peninsula.

Biden said "the United States will never recognize" Russia's annexation of Crimea and will continue to support Ukraine against Russian aggression.

The U.S. vice president also told the lawmakers that they have "an obligation to their homeland to answer the call of history" and build a united democratic nation that "stands through time."

"It is no exaggeration to say the hopes of freedom-loving people the world over are with you, because so much rides on your fragile experiment with democracy succeeding," Biden said. "It is equally important, by the way, for aggressors around the world to understand they can't use coercion, bribery, sending tanks and men across the border to extinguish the dreams of a people."

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko hold a joint press conference in Kyiv, Dec. 7.

Biden said each lawmaker will be judged by future generations upon whether they put the greater good of all Ukrainian people over local interests that have divided the country.

He urged Ukraine to make painful but crucial reforms to make governance more transparent, noting that "corruption eats Ukraine like cancer."

Biden met with President Petro Poroshenko in Kyiv on December 7 and announced new financial aid of $190 million to help Ukraine implement reforms.

He said after meeting Poroshenko that "Ukraine is on the cusp — what happens in the next year is likely to determine the fate of the country for generations."

He also met on December 7 with some individual members of parliament and from civic society, as well as with Kyiv Mayor Vitaly Klitschko.

Biden arrived in the Ukrainian capital late on December 6.

The United States and European Union, along with Kyiv, accuse Russia of seizing Crimea and backing the separatist revolt in reprisal for the February 2014 ouster of Moscow-backed President Viktor Yanukovych following months of antigovernment protests.

The protests were fueled by anger over rampant corruption and Yanukovych's abandonment of negotiations toward an Association Agreement with the EU amid Russian pressure.

In response to Russia's actions, Washington and Brussels have placed economic sanctions on Russian President Vladimir Putin's inner circle and have helped train and equip Ukraine's underfunded army with defensive equipment such as advanced radar.

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Ukraine resumes power supplies to Crimea

(RFE/RL)—Ukrainian officials say they are starting to resume electricity supplies to Crimea more than two weeks after power lines to the disputed territory were sabotaged, causing widespread blackouts.

The power cuts have severely disrupted the lives of 2 million Crimeans and exposed how dependent the peninsula remains on Ukraine a year and a half after it was annexed by Russia.

"We are in the process of resuming energy supplies," said Ihor Boska, regional head of Ukrenergo, the Ukrainian electric utility.

While the utility appeared close to restoring functioning of the Kakhovskaya power substation, which supplies much of the Kherson and Mykolayiv regions, three other damaged power transmission lines remain offline.

Crimea depends on Ukraine for most of its electricity. The first phase of Moscow's planned energy bridge between the peninsula and the Russian mainland won't be completed until later this month.

After the power lines went down, pro-Ukrainian activists, including many ethnic Tartars who opposed Crimea's annexation, prevented repairs by blocking access for engineers to pylons in Kherson in southern Ukraine.

But after negotiations, Tartar leader Lenur Islamov told 112 Television that the engineers have been allowed to work.

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Participating clergy and students with Holodomor survivor Natalka Talanchuk and her family.

St. Matthew School commemorates Holodomor

(St. Matthew School)—On November 27 our St. Matthew School community of students, staff, parents, and guests offered a memorial service for those who perished in the Holodomor of 1932-33.

A procession of clergy, special guests and students carrying candles, as well as, trays of prayer bracelets flooded the gymnasium as Svicha (A Candle) by O. Bilozir quietly played in the background.

The service was presided over by Edmonton Catholic Schools District Chaplain, Father Julian Bilyj with co-celebrants Reverend Fathers Yanko Herbut, Yuriy Suchevan and Cornell Zubritsky.

Also in attendance was Holodomor survivor Natalka Talanchuk, joined by her granddaughter and great grandson.

All in attendance sang the *Jesus prayer* in both Ukrainian and English in recognition of the Year of Mercy and all those touched by the Famine of 1931 – 1933.

Survivors of the Holodomor are shown standing in front of the memorial in front of city hall. (Photo courtesy Val Noseworthy)

Winnipeg Ukrainians commemorate victims of Holodomor

Marta Czurylowicz,
CTV Winnipeg, November 28, 2015

Every year, on the fourth Saturday of November, Ukrainians worldwide commemorate the great famine of 1932-1933 in soviet Ukraine. It is called the Holodomor.

People gathered at Winnipeg's city hall, in front of the Holodomor memorial, for a short panakhyda – a mass in memory of the lives lost in the genocide.

Lubomyr Luciuk, a professor at the Royal Military College of Canada, said the Holodomor took the lives of no less than 4.5 million people in just six months.

"When you think of that, you think of the enormous loss of life, the concentration in the geographical area, soviet Ukraine, and the intensity of the losses, it's a tragedy that's almost unique in world history," said Luciuk.

He said this event is important in bringing to the world's attention just how little known the Holodomor still is.

"The soviets denied it right to the end of the soviet union. There were people in Canada, unfortunately, who conspired to deny the famine," said Luciuk.

On the same day that Ukrainians held vigils around the world, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau voiced his solidarity and support for the Canadian–Ukrainian diaspora.

"Today, we stand with Ukrainians in denouncing the historical atrocities committed against them, and in support of their enduring right to self-determination, freedom, and democracy," said Trudeau.

Prime Minister Trudeau also touched on the current ongoing crisis in Ukraine stating that Canada can play an important part in bringing this conflict to an end.

"The Government of Canada stands firmly against Russia's ongoing military aggression in Ukraine," said Trudeau. "As a country, we also remain committed to helping rebuild the democratic, economic, and security institutions that will help Ukraine flourish once more."

In Winnipeg, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights posted a picture of the life-size statue of the young girl clutching a handful of wheat. She is the representation of the human loss of the Holodomor.

Luciuk said after years of people suppressing the truth about the famine, it finally came out.

"Today is about remembering the losses and making sure something like this doesn't happen again," said Luciuk.

Diotte vows to hold Sohi's feet to the fire

(UkrNews)—Official Opposition Leader Rona Ambrose on Nov. 20 announced Kerry Diotte has been named Deputy Critic for Urban Affairs.

"I received the call from Ms. Ambrose and jumped at the chance to take on this important role within our Conservative caucus," said Diotte who was an Edmonton City Councillor from 2010-2013.

"I look forward to holding my former City Hall colleague, and now Infrastructure Minister Amarjeet Sohi, to account, so that Edmonton gets its fair share of funding," said Diotte. "We have to ensure these new Liberals don't forget Edmonton."

More than 5.6 million Canadians voted for the Conservative Party on October 19.

"There is no doubt in my mind we will be the strongest Official Opposition in Canadian political history," said Diotte.

PHOTO – OFFICE OF MINISTER BILOUS

Holodomor commemorated at Legislature

St. Matthew and St. Martin School Choirs performed at the Legislature on November 25 to mark the 7th Anniversary of the Ukrainian Famine and Genocide (Holodomor) Memorial Day Act. The commemoration was facilitated by Robert E. Wanner, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in cooperation with the Ukrainian Canadian Congress – Alberta Provincial Council and the League of Ukrainian Canadians. The voices of the students echoed throughout the rotunda and brought tears to many in attendance. Pictured above: Students with Alberta Minister of Economic Development and Trade Deron Bilous.

UCC commemorates Holodomor

(UCC National)—UCC President Paul Grod issued the following statement on the 82nd Anniversary of the Holodomor, Nov. 28:

"This week we remember and commemorate the terrible tragedy of the Holodomor where countless millions of men, women and children were senselessly murdered through starvation by the communist regime of Joseph Stalin. Today the Holodomor remains an incredibly important and relevant human rights story.

"In trying to understand genocide, I have often asked myself why did dictators like Joseph Stalin or Adolph Hitler seek to destroy an entire people and why would countless collaborators do their bidding? And - Why is this relevant to us today? It seems so long ago.

"Unfortunately more than 80 years later, the Holodomor has more relevance to the people of Ukraine and the world than it has ever had before. At a recent Annual Toronto Ukrainian Famine Lecture, Pulitzer prize winner Anne Applebaum discussed how Stalin saw in Ukraine an existential threat, as Putin sees in Ukraine today. Stalin launched his assault on Ukraine because he knew that Ukraine was resistant to centralized rule, that Ukrainians were attached to their land and their traditions, and that Ukrainians could challenge Bolshevism and even cause it to collapse. Today Russia's President Vladimir Putin fears the attachment of Ukrainians to ideas of freedom, democracy, and western values like human rights. In fact Putin's regime as did Stalin's, cynically denies the very existence of a separate Ukrainian people. As Anne Applebaum said in her lecture, 'If Stalin feared that Ukrainian nationalism could bring down the Soviet regime, Putin fears that Ukraine's example could bring down his own regime, a modern autocratic kleptocracy.'

"Ukraine today is under military, economic and political attack by the Putin regime, much like it was under Stalin over 80 years ago. There is no civil war nor was there ever any separatist movement in eastern Ukraine. This is conflict, which has resulted in more than 8,000 deaths in the past 2 years, is entirely engineered, organized and run by Putin's regime and is driven by an evil propaganda war.

"The peace and freedom loving people of the world must boldly and actively stand up together against this great threat to global peace and security.

"Ukrainians have learned their lesson from the Holodomor and will not roll-over to the Putin's attempt to eradicate the Ukrainian nation. Around the world Ukrainian communities are working in their respective countries to gain support for the plight of the Ukrainian people that desire nothing more than to live in a country that is free from foreign aggression and respects the human dignity of its people.

"This week we look at today's plight of the Ukrainian people through the historical lens of the Holodomor. Many initiatives are underway in Canada, including the recent launch of the National Holodomor Awareness Tour, an innovative mobile classroom; the Memorial to Victims of Communism scheduled to be built in Parliamentary Precinct of Ottawa; and many valuable teaching tools are available such as the very moving online video testimonials of Holodomor survivors at www.holodomorsurvivors.com.

"Teaching the human rights lesson of the Holodomor will help ensure we stay vigilant and willing to stop modern day tyrants like Vladimir Putin who today has unleashed a war to eradicate the Ukrainian people.

"May God inspire us to do good and may the memory of the victims of the Holodomor be eternal - Вічная Їм Пам'ять"

May this Christmas Season be filled with joy and the New Year bring you good health and happiness.

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MacEwan UNIVERSITY | UKRAINIAN RESOURCE AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

The Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre (URDC) at MacEwan University wishes a Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year to all. We would like to pass a special thank-you to our numerous friends, colleagues, and supporters in Canada and Ukraine, who contribute to successful implementation of our mandate. Thanks to your generous support, we are able to pursue a range of academic and cultural outreach initiatives that link our two countries closer together.

Svitlana (Lana) Krys, PhD
Kule Chair in Ukrainian Studies and Director
Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre (URDC)

http://MacEwan.ca/URDC
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PO Box 1796
Edmonton AB T5J 2P2

З Різдвом Христовим

святом великої радости та надії, щиро вітаємо голову Української Греко-Католицької Церкви, Блаженнішого Святослава, Високопреосвященного Митрополита Лаврентія, Синод Української Греко-Католицької Церкви, усе духовенство, чернецтво, боголюбивих мирян, проводи і членство українських громадських організацій та установ, та ввесь український нарід.

"Небо і земля сьогодні хай з пророками радіють, ангели і люди хай духовно торжествують, Бог бо в тілі появився тим, що сиділи в темряві і тіні".

З нами Бог!
Христос раждається! – Славім Його!

May the joy of God's abundant blessings and the peace of Jesus be with you all as we celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord.

MOST REV. DAVID MOTIUK
Eparch of Edmonton

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PHOTO — WALTER KOROBAYLO

Vesnivka Choir with composer Roman Hurko and participating clergy

Vesnivka Liturgy premiere celebrates 50 seasons of song

By John Pidkowich

Vesnivka Choir treated music lovers in the Ukrainian community and many others in the Canadian music community to a unique heavenly choral experience to commence Vesnivka's 50th Anniversary Season. Vesnivka presented the world premiere of Roman Hurko's Liturgy No.4 "Vesnivka" conducted by Vesnivka's founder, choral and artistic director Halyna Kvitka Kondracki on Sunday, October 18, 2015 at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Toronto. This has been Vesnivka's home base since it first started as a girl's choir at the parish's associated Ukrainian School. The magnificent musical work was especially commissioned for the choir's Golden Anniversary and newly written for its matured all-female voices. Present at the premiere, composer Roman Hurko is a Canadian American with Ukrainian heritage, born and raised in Toronto, who has childhood roots attending St. Nicholas Church and later conducting its youth choir. Hurko, who started composing in high school, is a graduate of the University of Toronto and Yale Institute of Sacred Music, and a member of the Composers' Union of Ukraine since 2004.

This remarkable performance by Vesnivka foremost created a prayerful and solemn spiritual experience for some 500 attendees. Rightly so, following the welcome address and appeal by St. Nicholas Church Pastor Rev. Dr. Roman Lobay to the listeners as People of God to avail themselves of the opportunity in time and space to gather mystically as the Body of Christ, meditate upon the sung liturgy, reflect upon partaking in the Eucharist for the forgiveness of sins, and give thanks to Christ's sacrifices for our salvation.

Main excerpts of the liturgy were sung in concert format in Ukrainian according to the text of the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, the most celebrated Eucharistic liturgy in the Eastern Christian Catholic and Orthodox Churches of the Byzantine Rite. An English text translation was provided in a programme. The priest's invocation for the choir's responses and prayers was sung most spiritually by Rev. Taras Dusanowskyj with superbly resonating baritone voice. Also, the soprano solo lines were sung wonderfully with bright and clear enlightening voice by choir member Lesia Komorowsky. To round out and enrich the liturgy-in-concert, the Toronto Ukrainian Male Chamber Choir performed adeptly to provide a full dependable sound to join and complement Vesnivka in singing the closing prayers Gentle Light and Ave Maria, written earlier by composer Roman Hurko.

The consistently high standard of musical choral performance by Vesnivka is well-known on many stages and in concert halls, both locally and internationally. Vesnivka's impressive performance from high above in St. Nicholas Church choir loft generated no less a majestic sound with full range dynamics and contrasts, having great attention paid to details in producing rich tones, harmonies and keen intonation, all enhanced by the acoustics provided by the church knave's high ceiling and wraparound wood. To the audience listening below and around on the balcony, surrounded by the church's magnificent interior of religious paintings, icons and iconostasis, an angelic image of the choir was imprinted in the mind, reflective of Vesnivka Choir at St. Nicholas painted by William Kurelek in 1973.

A post-concert reception welcomed all choir members, Vesnivka alumnae and audience, held in the Church Hall. A short program lead by Vesnivka's President Irka Nabereznyj included Kvitka Kondracki being awarded a medal from the Ukrainian World Congress by Board Member Anna Kisil for 'Outstanding contribution during the Year of Taras Shevchenko [2014] celebrating 200 years of his birth', and presentation of a $5,000 sponsorship cheque to Vesnivka Choir from Ukrainian Credit Union by Board Members Walter Drozdowsky and Oleh Marianchuk. Vesnivka also gratefully acknowledges the generosity of these key sponsors: the Ontario Arts Council; Toronto Arts Council; Ihnatowycz Family Foundation; Olzhych Foundation; Shevchenko Foundation; John and Lessia Tkach; Delores Y. Buka-Huculak; Temerty Family and many other generous supporters.

A special round of applause was given to the Vesnivka 50th Anniversary Committee chaired by Myroslawa Anna Diakun and comprised of many Vesnivka members. Their dedicated hard work and months of planning gave people attending the reception event the opportunity to learn about Vesnivka's history and accomplishments. Help from the men in the Chamber Choir and spouses of Vesnivka members was also greatly appreciated. Numerous displays about Vesnivka's past 50 years were presented including concert dress outfits arranged by Lydia Cymbaluk, photo tableaux of many tours and competitions held in several countries, and a 700 plus photo montage running slideshow of the choir's events and trips prepared by Nykola Parzei. There was the opportunity to purchase Vesnivka's new 50th Anniversary CD recording, decorations, and chef aprons designed with Vesnivka's logo. Most importantly, everyone had the opportunity to meet with Vesnivka members and alumnae, and of course enjoy the delicious food and refreshments lovingly prepared and presented for sharing.

Vesnivka repeated singing in Ukrainian Roman Hurko's Liturgy No. 4 "Vesnivka" in its entirety during regular Sunday Divine Liturgy at The Great Martyr, St. George the Victorious Ukrainian Catholic Church with Pastor Rev. Dmytro Hancharyk on November 1, 2015 in Oshawa, Ont. The Ukrainian Catholic Women's League prepared a beautiful reception after the church service for Vesnivka and the parish community.

Bravo Vesnivka at 50!

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Now, more than ever, our Church and society in Ukraine require a new generation of faithful, talented and highly educated leaders. Thanks to your generosity and giving spirit, we are confident that the Comprehensive Campaign for the construction of a new campus and the creation of new programs at UCU in Lviv will reach its goal. Your continued generosity will allow UCU to form and educate "A New Generation for a New Ukraine"!

Thank you, dear friends for supporting the Comprehensive Campaign of the Ukrainian Catholic University. Blessings to you and yours during this holiday season!

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PHOTO – DOYLE C. MARKO, DCM PHOTOGRAPHY

Turkish Dance

Vinok provides a delightful "Christmas Around the World"

(UkrNews)—Vinok Worldance once again provided a delightful celebration of holiday traditions with their Christmas Around the World performance, held November 18 - 22 at the Chateau Louis Conference Centre.

This year's production marked the return of guest host, Timothy J. Anderson. Bass-baritone Timothy Anderson's international career embraces concert performance and stage roles in operas and major musicals. He has appeared as a soloist with many orchestras and choirs in repertoire ranging from the medieval to the avant-garde. Along with his beautiful vocals, Anderson also entertained the audience with his joyful banter and humour. This year's Christmas Around the World featured dances inspired by many traditions, including: Bulgarian, Mexican, Austrian, Egyptian, Macedonian, Hungarian, Hassidic, Turkish, French-Canadian and African Gumboots.

Dancers include Katie Calverley, Ines Castaneda, Natasha Mandurusiak, Taisa Marko, Paige Tirs, Chris Atkins, Stano Gertle, Francis Mayrand and Damian Rudiak.

Their wonderful choreographies were complemented by live music by Vinok's talented multi-instrumentalists – John Calverley, who is also the Music Director, Thorn Bennett, Thorn Golubv, Tim Ritter and Dianne Tebby.

Among their highlights was a unique rendition of "Shchedryk", the traditional Ukrainian carol..

Leanne Koziak is the Artistic Director and Co-Founder of Vinok, Taisa Marko, Artistic Associate and Dyle Marko Co-Founder and Photographer.

Working behind the scenes are Al Rasko, Executive Director; Mike Tulley, Technical Director; Alice Fraser, Admin Support, Natasha Mandrusiak, Admin and Artistic Support and Geoff Wusyk, Marketing;

Dubbed "Canada's United Nations of Dance", Vinok has contributed numerous productions, nearly 1500 performances, and dances from 60 cultures to the international folk dance world. The professional performers have had the privilege to tour Canada east coast to west, from northern Canada to the southern United States and internationally to Dubai and Taiwan.

Poroshenko says Ukraine to keep defense spending high

(RFE/RL)—Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko says his government will spend five percent of gross domestic product on defense and security next year, in a bid to strengthen the army in its fight against pro-Russian separatists in the east.

Poroshenko said on December 2 that his government plans to spend about 14 percent of the government budget, or 100 billion hryvnyas, on defense and security in 2016.

Ukraine spent 90 billion hryvnyas ($3.75 billion) this year.

The conflict has killed more than 7,900 people so far. After a period of relative calm, both sides have complained of increased cease-fire violations and use of heavy artillery that was meant to have been withdrawn under the terms of a truce deal.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said on December 2 that there is a "real risk" hostilities will flare up again in eastern Ukraine.

"Russian-backed separatists have not yet withdrawn their troops and equipment, illegal groups in eastern Ukraine have not been disarmed, and Ukraine has not been able to reestablish control over its border," he added.

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Разом з колядою желаєм Вам щиро,
Щоб Вам все було весело й мило.
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На щастя й радість хай буде багата,
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і щасливого Нового року!

Wishing you all the joys and happiness of the Christmas Season.

Ukrainian DNIPRO Ensemble of Edmonton

Irena Szmihelsky, Artistic Director
Gloria Zaharia, Assistant Conductor
Irena Tarnawsky, Accompanist

«...Хай на небі зірка ясно засіяє,
а воля в Україну нехай поспішає.»

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Для скасування віз Україна все виконала – Яценюк у Брюсселі

Віталій Єреміца, *Радіо Свобода*

Подальші «візові справи» для України виглядають доволі яскраво. На це вказують як офіційні заяви після засідання Ради Асоціації в Брюсселі, 7 грудня, так і неофіційні європейські дипломатичні джерела, що варті довіри. Голова українського уряду Арсеній Яценюк також завірив європейців у вигідності для них ЗВТ із Україною та закликав заблокувати новий європейський газовий проект російського «Газпрому».

За тиждень до оприлюднення звіту Єврокомісії щодо того, наскільки готова Україна до скасування віз, у Брюсселі налаштовані позитивно. Єврокомісар з питань сусідства Йоганнес Ган поки що хоч і не хоче робити остаточних прогнозів, однак заявляє: «Доволі впевнений у тому, що ми матимемо досить позитивний звіт в середині грудня, але фінальне рішення я не можу і не хочу прогнозувати».

Прем'єр-міністр України Арсеній Яценюк (посередині), Єврокомісар з питань сусідства Йоганнес Ган (ліворуч) та верховний представник ЄС із закордонних справ та політики безпеки Федеріка Могеріні під час зустрічі у Брюсселі. 7 грудня 2015 року

Голова європейської дипломатії Федеріка Могеріні, торкнувшись візової тематики, зазначила, що прогрес є, і його в Брюсселі вітають, але й закликають йти далі шляхом приготувань, завершивши ті рекомендації, що ще не виконані.

Натомість прем'єр-міністр Арсеній Яценюк каже, що – як на думку Києва – український уряд для скасування віз виконав усе.

«Ми очікуємо фінального, наголошую, фінального звіту, який буде опублікований 15-го числа. Україна виконала все, що взяла на себе для того, щоби був запроваджений безвізовий режим. Ми сподіваємся на позитивне рішення наших європейських партнерів», – заявив прем'єр-міністр після засідання Ради асоціації Україна-ЄС, де підбивали підсумки двостороннього співробітництва в рамках Угоди про асоціацію.

Власне, за нинішньою інформацією від високопосадовця в європейських дипломатичних колах, звіт щодо візової лібералізації для України буде позитивним та відкриє можливість скасування цих обмежень вже протягом наступного року.

Втім, не лише задля віз, а й загалом для покращення життя українців, перед Києвом ще залишається багато роботи. На короткострокову перспективу голова європейської дипломатії визначає продовження руху українців до таких цілей, як конституційна реформа, боротьба з корупцією, реорганізація системи правосуддя, виборів, секторів безпеки, енергетики, децентралізація та покращення бізнес-клімату.

Закликавши не послаблювати санкційного тиску на Москву, доки не будуть виконані умови «Мінська», Арсеній Яценюк у Раді Євросоюзу також наголосив, що проект «Північний потік-2» має бути ретельно проаналізований та заблокований, бо він не вигідний не лише Україні, а й Європейському Союзові. «Він не лише позбавляє Україну, Словаччину й Польщу мільярдів доларів доходів, а й позбавляє ЄС реальної конкуренції на енергоринку та збільшує монополію «Газпрому», – зазначив голова українського уряду.

Втім, ЄС у цей період важких викликів – на боці України, запевняє верховний представник ЄС із закордонних справ та політики безпеки Федеріка Могеріні.

«Ми нагадали, що всі дії, пов'язані з невизнанням анексії Криму й Севастополя, мають далі тривати. Тим часом, для мирного, політичного владнання конфлікту на сході України всі сторони мають виконати Мінські угоди», – зауважила голова європейського дипломатичного корпусу.

Сьомого грудня прем'єр-міністр Арсеній Яценюк в рамках візиту до Брюсселя, головував на другому засіданні Ради асоціації разом із верховним представником Євросоюзу із закордонних справ та політики безпеки, віце-президентом Єврокомісії Федерікою Могеріні.

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Poroshenko meets Trudeau in Paris

(UkrNews)—President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko met with Prime Minister of Canada Justin Trudeau in Paris. Nov. 29.

In the course of the first meeting with new Prime Minister of Canada, Poroshenko talked about the developments in Donbas and emphasized the importance of enhancing transatlantic unity in the issue of preserving sanctions against Russia until the full restoration of the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Trudeau assured Poroshenko of his full support for the people of Ukraine in the struggle for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. He underlined that Canada was ready to put further pressure on Moscow and assist Ukraine with the reinforcement of its Armed Forces.

The parties emphasized the importance of deepening the special partnership between the states, particularly in trade-economic and military-technical spheres. The interlocutors also noted the necessity of prompt preparation to the signature of bilateral agreement on free trade.

The Prime Minister informed the President of the results of the G20 Summit in Antalya and assured of transatlantic solidarity with Ukraine.

Poroshenko thanked Trudeau for his solidarity with the people of Ukraine at a time when the whole world honours memory of Holodomor victims in Ukraine.

The parties also discussed the issue of simplification of the visa-free regime for Ukrainian citizens.

Trudeau confirmed his willingness to visit Ukraine at the invitation of Poroshenko.

PHOTO – EMBASSY OF UKRAINE TO CANADA WEBSITE

Petro Poroshenko with Justine Trudeau

Sixteenth Ukrainian-origin MP identified

(UkrNews)—Ukrainian News has now identified a sixteenth Member of Parliament who is of Ukrainian origin.

He is Wayne Stetski, NDP member for the B.C. riding of Kootenay-Columbia.

His great grandfather, Gregory was born in Kitzman, Bukovyna, on January 9, 1862. His great grandmother Magdalena was also born in Kitzman on July 4, 1869.

Gregory and Magdalena were married in about 1886. Six children were born to them in the old country, seven more were born in Canada. In 1900, they left the town of Kitzman for Hamburg, where they boarded the ship Cap Frio of the Hamburg America line, bound for New York. They arrived in New York on October 15, 1900. It is not known how they made their way to Canada, but on February 15, 1901, they moved into their first Canadian dwelling in the area of Canora, Sask.

The other 15 Ukrainian-origin MPs are (East to West): Kyle Peterson - Lib (Newmarket-Aurora, Ont); Chrystia Freeland - Lib (University-Rosedale, Ont); Julie Dzerowicz - Lib (Davenport, Ont); Borys Wrzesnewskyj - Lib (Etobicoke-Centre, Ont); Don Rusnak - (Lib Thunder Bay–Rainy River, Ont); MaryAnn Mihychuk – Lib (Kildonan-St. Pau, Man); Terry (Taras) Duguid - Lib (Winnipeg South, Man.); James Bezan - Con (Selkirk-Interlake, Man.); Tom Lukiwski (Moose Jaw-Lake Centre-Lanigan, Sask);- David Yurdiga, Con (Fort McMurray – Cold Lake); Kelly McCauley – Con (Edmonton West, Alta); Rona Ambrose – Con (Sturgeon River-Parkland); Jim Eglinski - Con (Yellowhead, Alta); Mark Warawa - Con (Langley-Aldergrove, BC) and Dianne Watts – Con (South Surrey-White Rock, BC).

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Boissonnault appointed Parliamentary Secretary to Heritage Minister

(Office of Randy Boissonnault)—Edmonton Centre MP Randy Boissonnault has been appointed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage Mélanie Joly.

"As a Franco-Albertan, an entrepreneur, and a patron of the arts, I am honoured to serve as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Canadian Heritage. This portfolio encourages Canadians to tell their stories to each other and to the world. I look forward to working with a dynamic team across the country to share these stories," said Boissonnault.

Boissonnault will be assisting Minister Joly with work on files such as celebrating Canada's 150th birthday, restoring funding to CBC/Radio-Canada, increasing the funding for the Canada Council for the Arts and promoting linguistic duality across the country.

Upon making the Parliamentary Secretaries announcement, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said the following:

"In order to build a country that works for everyone, you need a strong and diverse team. Today I have the pleasure of announcing that 35 remarkable Canadians will be taking on new and expanded responsibilities. These highly motivated individuals, who come from a variety of backgrounds and communities across our great country, bring a wealth of talent and experience to the table that will complement existing Cabinet strengths."

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Віктор Пінчук

Ігор Коломойський

Українські олігархи судяться у Лондоні

Олесь Ковач, Радіо Свобода

У британській столиці відбулося перше судове засідання у справі, яка обіцяє бути однією з найдорожчих в історії британського судочинства. У цій справі проходять три українських олігархи, а у її центрі перебуває позов на 1,3 мільярда фунтів стерлінгів, що його подав колишній власник найдорожчого будинку Лондона – український підприємець і меценат Віктор Пінчук. Позов подано проти двох українських мільярдерів – Ігоря Коломойського і Геннадія Боголюбова. Витрати на судовий процес у Лондоні обчислюються сумою у понад 50 мільйонів фунтів стерлінгів.

Відомий український мільярдер Віктор Пінчук, який вважає своїми близькими друзями колишніх керівників Великобританії і США, зокрема Тоні Блера та Білла Клінтона, а також митців Елтона Джона й Даміена Хьорста, подав судовий позов проти двох відомих українських олігархів Ігоря Коломойського, який окрім Дніпропетровська також мешкає у Женеві, і проти Геннадія Боголюбова, який мешкає у престижному лондонському районі Белгравія. У позові висуваються звинувачення у вбивстві, хабарництві та політичних інтригах.

Полем судової битви було обрано саме Лондон, який є близьким і для самого позивача – Пінчука, який свого часу володів будинком вартістю у 80 мільйонів фунтів стерлінгів (його вважали найдорожчим приватним будинком британської столиці). У п'ятницю Верховний суд у Лондоні заслухав те, що визначається як «неймовірні звинувачення» у тому, що Ігор Коломойський був причетний до низки вбивств та побиттів, які стосувалися бізнесової оборудки. Адвокати Пінчука наполягали, що їм має бути надано право подати на розгляд докази того, як Коломойський висував «надвичайно брутальні погрози, висловлені у доволі різкій формі» щодо особи, з якою він мав справи. У заяві українського правника Сергія Карпенка, яку було зачитано на судових слуханнях у Лондоні, йшлося про те, що Коломойський погрожував йому під час їхньої зустрічі 2003 року.

Як зазначалося у заяві правників Пінчука, через чотири дні після того, як відбулась різка розмова Коломойського з Карпенком, його помічника серйозно побили на вулиці, а наступного місяця на самого Карпенка було вчинено напад з використанням металевого кийка та холодної зброї. Адвокати Пінчука додали, що кримінальні злочинці, які вчинили ті напади, були пов'язані з Сергієм Нікітіним, особистим охоронцем Ігоря Коломойського, який згодом очолив фірму охоронців, власниками якої були Коломойський та інший звинувачений у цій справі Геннадій Боголюбов. У заяві правників також йдеться, що самого Нікітіна було потім знайдено мертвим у Дніпропетровську. Його тіло виловили у річці наприкінці серпня 2003 року з десятьма ножовими пораненнями. Цікаво, що того, хто скоїв вбивство Нікітіна, також згодом знайшли мертвим за обставин, які на той час було подано як можливе самогубство. Однак, слідству було надано докази того, що нападника було застрелено пострілом у підборіддя.

У свою чергу Ігор Коломойський рішуче заперечує будь-яку свою причетність до цих справ. У перший день судового засідання у Лондоні також йшлося, що не зважаючи на те, що українські слідчі органи тоді вирішили звинуватити Коломойського у вбивстві Карпенка 2005 року, справу не порушили. У перебігу слухань адвокати Пінчука також повідомили, що український прокурор визнав: у записаній на плівку розмові Коломойський пропонував йому гроші в обмін на закриття слідства щодо його ролі у змові з метою вбивства, хоча ті гроші виплачені, зрештою, так і не були.

«Пан Коломойський навіть не замислюється, коли висловлює серйозні погрози своїм опонентам, так само як він не замислюється щодо втручання до процесу судочинства», – зазначив лондонський адвокат Віктора Пінчука Джонатан Кров.

Під час лондонських судових слухань у п'ятницю було висунуто низку інших звинувачень проти Ігоря Коломойського, зокрема, щодо суперечки у справі власності Криворізького залізорудного комбінату.

Втім, лондонська правнича команда Ігоря Коломойського визначила висунуті проти їхнього підзахисного обвинувачення як такі, що не мають стосунку до реальних подій.

«Докази, що їх подано на розгляд Верховного суду у Лондоні, не стосуються якихось конкретних подій, а радше є моментом, який відволікає увагу органів судочинства. На додаток, звинувачення оскаржуються у найсерйозніший спосіб, бо ж вони ґрунтуються лише на тому, що ніби-то могло б мати місце, включно зі звинуваченнями у причетності пана Коломойського до вбивства», – заявив лондонський адвокат Ігоря Коломойського Лоренс Рабіновітц.

Суддя ч Верховного суду Лондона Стівен Мейлз ухвалив рішення, що докази у справі про вбивство Карпенка не братимуться до уваги у перебігу судового процесу, який, як планується, має розпочатися 4 січня 2016 року.

«Розгляд цих доказів, без жодного сумніву, викривить слухання у справі і відволікатиме увагу суддів. Значення тих доказів є недостатнім для того, аби їх брати до уваги», – заявив на слуханнях суддя лондонського Верховного суду Стівен Мейлз.

Суддя Мейлз також додав, що ця справа проливає світло на «хаотичний та жорстокий» світ українських бізнесових справ того часу.

Лондонський судовий процес у справі українських олігархів, який розпочнеться на початку наступного року і триватиме від 8 до 10 тижнів, свідчить про дедалі більшу популярність англійського судочинства у міжнародних бізнесових колах, коли йдеться про бізнесові суперечки та вирішення проблем підприємців.

Попередньою подібною нашумілою справою був судовий процес у Лондоні, в якому російський олігарх Борис Березовський, який впав у немилість до кремлівських правителів, судився з популярним олігархом Романом Абрамовичем, який є власником лондонського футбольного клубу «Челсі». Березовський програв цю справу, в якій він вимагав від Абрамовича відшкодування на 3 мільярди фунтів стерлінгів. Згодом самого Березовського знайшли мертвим у його маєтку під Лондоном.

Historian Snyder delivers Toronto famine lecture

(HREC)—Historian Timothy Snyder delivered the Toronto Annual Ukrainian Famine Lecture to a crowded auditorium at the University of Toronto on November 4. Speaking on the topic "The Ukrainian Famine as World History," he presented an engaging and thought-provoking lecture that was well received by those in attendance.

Snyder is the Housum Professor of History at Yale University and the author of nine books, including Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin (2010) and, most recently, Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning.

The speaker's major theme was that a proper understanding of the Holodomor, aside from its centrality to Ukrainian experience and Soviet politics, provides an opening to a more complete history of Europe. Professor Snyder began by describing how major events in European history "actually make more sense with Ukraine." He then turned to an examination of the 1930s and the Famine itself. He concluded with remarks about Ukraine and Europe today.

In explaining how European history is made more complete by the inclusion of Ukraine into its broader scheme, Professor Snyder cited the significance of Rus' – with its Christian conversion, Scandinavian settlement, the codification of law, and encounters between settled and nomadic societies – as a centre of major developments of the day. Snyder also noted that the Renaissance and Reformation/Counter-Reformation in Ukraine are in many ways more interesting in their complexity than these trends as studied in the history of Western Europe.

As Ukraine was absorbed into the Russian realm, direct ties with the rest of Europe diminished. It thus entered the period of "the world's first globalization" – completed by the mid-nineteenth century and marked by imperialism, colonialism, and empires – as one of numerous sites developing national movements. These eventually would lead to a process of decolonization and nation state formation, particularly with the collapse of empires in the wake of the First World War.

However, an independent state was not established in Ukraine, notwithstanding a national movement that suffered many casualties in its 1917–1920 effort to establish one. Instead Ukraine was incorporated into the Soviet Union, which sought to remake the world – a revolutionary form of globalization, or a counter-globalization – but in the end fell back on the state model. As Professor Snyder explained, Ukraine then became

PHOTO – HREC

Professor Timothy Snyder listening to a student

a battleground in Stalin's plans to modernize the USSR through a process of "internal colonization" that would draw upon its agricultural resources in order to spur industrial development. Stalin and his inner circle blamed Ukrainians for the failure of collectivization and thus "nationalized" the issue. They then instituted policies, including blacklisting of villages, the closing of the Ukrainian borders, and a ban on travel from the countryside, that led to the deaths of millions of Ukrainians.

Hitler took note of the starvation of a country that could serve as the world's breadbasket. He saw the colonization of Ukraine as central to a broader scheme to organize the world along racial lines. His launch of Operation Barbarossa was both a step in the German colonization project and toward eliminating Jews (regarded as standing in the way of the new social order) – both a war of conquest and a war of extermination.

Professor Snyder pointed out that the European Union manages to incorporate states that were once part of another nation's empire along with states that once had colonies. He noted that this union makes the existence of nation states possible. Ukraine's recent efforts toward European integration are a recognition that a move toward Europe is key to its existence as a nation state. The contemporary Ukraine-Russia conflict can thus be seen as an attempt by Russia to stop the process of Ukraine's Europeanization, he said.

Professor Snyder ended his lecture with a reference to a recent article from the Russian news agency "Sputnik" denying the existence of the Holodomor. He noted that such propaganda is not only anti-Ukrainian but also is aimed to confuse our understanding of European and world history

In the lively question period that followed, Professor Snyder suggested that Russia had not learned from the Soviet collapse (i.e., it was not a transformational event). He noted that because it was a land empire, Russia historically has been confused about where the country ended and the empire began. Professor Snyder posited that Ukraine is ahead of Russia in the formation of a national identity. On the question of potential EU membership, he stated that Ukrainians are not so naive as to believe that joining the EU will solve all of their country's problems. Rather it is a long-term goal and part of a process. Professor Snyder said that he believes that in time Ukraine will join the EU because the EU will desire it a member.

The lecture was organized by the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium (HREC) of the Toronto office of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta; the Petro Jacyk Program for the Study of Ukraine (Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, University of Toronto); the Canadian Foundation for Ukrainian Studies; the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (Toronto Branch); and the Chair of Ukrainian Studies, University of Toronto. This was the eighteenth Toronto Annual Ukrainian Famine Lecture. Past lecturers have included James Mace, Norman Naimark, Alexander Motyl and Anne Applebaum.

The following day, Professor Snyder and approximately 20 graduate students from the Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at the University of Toronto met for a roundtable discussion on a range of historical issues. HREC and the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre at St. Vladimir Institute hosted the event.

Sen. Andreychuk marks Holodomor

(UkrNews)—Senator Raynell Andreychuk made the following statement ahead of the Ukrainian Famine and Genocide ("Holodomor") Memorial Day on Saturday, November 28, 2015:

"The fourth Saturday in November has been recognized by Ukrainian communities throughout the world as a day to remember the millions killed when, through agricultural collectivization, Joseph Stalin set out to destroy Ukrainians' aspirations for a free and independent Ukraine, and to finance rapid industrialization.

"Holodomor Memorial Day is equally an occasion to promote the fundamental freedoms of a democratic society.

"Amid ongoing challenges to Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, this solemn commemoration provides occasion to assert that neither Famine-Genocide, nor invasion, can extinguish the Ukrainian national spirit."

The Ukrainian Famine and Genocide of 1932-33, known as the Holodomor, was deliberately planned and executed by the Soviet regime.

Through forced collectivisation, Joseph Stalin sought to systematically destroy the Ukrainian people's aspirations for a free and independent Ukraine, causing the death of millions of Ukrainians in 1932 and 1933.

Most of those who perished were Ukrainians. Many Kazakhs, Russians, Jews, Poles and others also lost their lives.

In June 2003, The Senate of Canada unanimously called on the Government of Canada to recognize the Ukrainian famine as an act of genocide.

On May 27, 2008, Bill C-459, An Act to establish a Ukrainian Famine and Genocide ("Holodomor") Memorial Day and to recognize the Ukrainian Famine of 1932-33 as an act of Genocide was adopted by the Parliament of Canada. It designates the fourth Saturday in November as 'Ukrainian Famine and Genocide ("Holodomor") Memorial Day'.

UN raises death toll to 9,000

(RFE/RL)—A UN report released on December 9 says the confirmed death toll from the conflict in eastern Ukraine now exceeds 9,000, despite a "significant reduction of hostilities in certain parts" of the region.

The report by the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine attributed the decrease in hostilities to the withdrawal of "certain heavy weapons by the Ukrainian military" and pro-Russian separatist fighters.

But it warned that weapons and fighters are still pouring into rebel-held areas of eastern Ukraine from Russia.

It said the death toll since fighting began in April 2014 had reached 9,098 in mid-November with an other 20, 732 people injured.

The casualty toll includes civilians, Ukrainian government troops, and pro-Russian armed groups.

The report says there were 47 civilian deaths in eastern Ukraine between August 26 and Nov.15.

It said most of those deaths were caused by "explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices.

Poroshenko takes part in Holodomor memorial ceremony

(RFE/RL)—Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has taken part in ceremonies to commemorate the millions who died of famine under Soviet dictator Josef Stalin.

Poroshenko attended a ceremony in the capital, Kyiv, at the museum dedicated to the famine, or Holodomor.

A minute of silence was also held across Ukraine.

November 28 has been marked in Ukraine as the day to commemorate the victims of the Holodomor since 2006.

The famine took place in 1932 and 1933 as Soviet leader Stalin's police forced peasants in Ukraine to join collective farms by requisitioning their grain and other foodstuffs.

It is estimated that up to 9 million people died as a result of executions, deportation, and starvation during the Stalin-era campaign.

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From the Director and staff at the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies

З Різдвом Христовим та Новим роком!

У цей святковий час ми з вдячністю згадуємо усіх вас, хто зробив вагомий внесок у розвиток нашого інституту.
Шановні меценати, донори та друзі!
Ми щиро вдячні за вашу підтримку!
Запрошуємо вас на святкування 40-річчя КІУСу в 2016 р.

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We, at Ukrainian News, would like to take this opportunity to thank the many businesses and people who have supported us in so many ways throughout 2016 To our readers, donors, advertisers and contributing writers we offer our sincere thanks. May you all have a very Merry Christmas and be blessed with health and prosperity in the New Year.

CHRIST IS BORN!

Editor and Staff of Ukrainian News

ХРИСТОС РАЖДАЄТЬСЯ!

Усім нашим шановним читачам, жертводавцям, підприємцям які підтримують нас своїми оголошеннями та прихильникам пересилаємо найщиріші побажання радісних свят Христового Різдва та кріпкого здоров'я й успіхів в Новому Році.

Видавець та працівники редакції «Українських Вістей»

Биківня – трагічне місце пам'яті

Дагмара Турчин-Дувірак,
пресовий референт НТШ.

27 жовтня у Пластовій Домівці ім. Гуцуляків в Торонто відбулася чергова доповідь НТШ ім.Шевченка в Канаді. Цього разу Товариство приймала відомого історика з України Юрія Шаповала. Як розповів у своєму представленні магістр Роман Сенькус, д-р Шаповал є професором історії при Інституті політичних та етно-національних студій Національної академії наук України, авторитетним дослідником історії України XX-го століття, автором понад 800 наукових розвідок, серед яких – кілька десятків книг. Найновіша його книжка - про Биківню, трагічне місце розстрілу енкаведистами тисяч українців у 1937-19338 роках. Саме Биківні і присвятив свою доповідь проф. Шаповал.

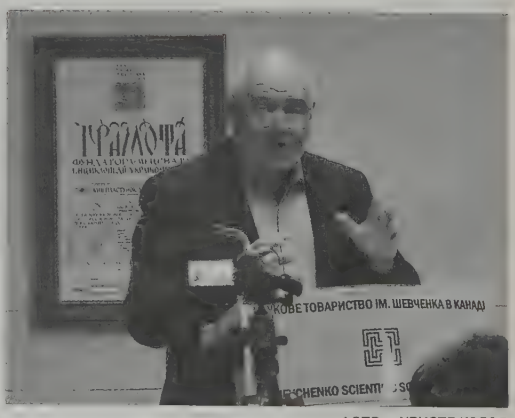

ФОТО – ХРИСТЯ КОЛОС

Д-р Юрій Шаповал

Розпочав свою доповідь д-р Шаповал з опису місця. Биківня – селище неподалік Києва на трасі Київ-Чернігів. У лісі поблизу селища знаходиться найбільший знайдений на сьогодні могильник українців, що стали жертвами єжовського терору в 1937- 1938 роках. За даними істориків, в 1937-1938 роках було розстріляно 145 867 мешканців України. Терор став відповіддю Єжова на телеграму Сталіна від 3 липня 1937 року про розкуркулення українських селян. Телеграма стала початком так званої куркульської операції, внаслідок якої були репресовані та ув'язнені сотні тисяч українців. Оскільки в'язниці були переповнені "ворогами народу", виникла необхідність їх розвантажити, і почалися масові розстріли. Спочатку трупи хоронили на Лук'янівському кладовищі у Києві. Але скоро там місця забракло і так з'явилася Биківня.

Тіла в ліс привозили між третьою і п'ятою годинами ранку. Привозили вантажівками, клали в одну яму по 13 тіл валетом, пересипали тіла вапном, а зверху садили дерева. Місце обнесли парканом вище двох метрів. За парканом збудували будиночок, де перебували 4 охоронці. Місце також охоронялося сигналізацією і собаками. Очевидно, це трималося в секреті, але місцеві мешканці знали про Биківню. Коли 19 вересня 1941 року німці увійшли в Київ, один з місцевих показав їм місце поховання, і вже 21 вересня там почали розкопки. Про знайдені трупи надрукували в газетах. Але з відступом німців місце знову було засекречено.

В роки короткої хрущовської відлиги Биківнею зацікавилися молоді митці-шестидесятники –, до Биківні їздили Алла Горська, Лесь Танюк, Василь Симоненко. Тримати Биківню в секреті стало неможливо, і в 1971 році там почала працювати перша урядова комісія. Знайдені останки 49 чоловіків та 105 жінок перепоховали в братській могилі, а злочин списали на німців. Наступні державні комісії, зокрема третя, що під керівництвом Івана Гладуша працювала в 1987 році, також прийшла до висновків, що поховання ніяк не пов'язані зі сталінськими репресіями. На підтвердження наводили факт, що в одній з могил була знайдена печатка НКВД.

15 липня 1988 року в Биківні відбулося перше неформальне зібрання, а в грудні того ж року там було споруджено пам'ятник "жертвам фашистських окупантів". Врешті, була організована четверта комісія, до якої вперше залучили представників громадських організацій. У 1989 році за архівами КДБ вдалося встановити ідентичність 6 783 похованих жертв. Про німців як виконавців розстрілів більше не йшлося.

10 травня 1990 року на місці поховань було поставлено хреста. 22 травня 2001 року тут створено заповідник. За президента Віктора Ющенка Биківня набула статусу національного заповідника і була підпорядкована Інституту національної пам'яті.

На сьогодні, за документами НКВД встановлено 14 191 осіб, що були розстріляні і поховані в Биківні. Експерти довели, що розстріли відбувалися в 1937-1938 роках під час єжовського терору. Коли під репресію потрапив сам Єжов, то розстріляли і поховали в Биківні і тих, хто виконував його накази – звідси знайдені в могилах речі, що належали чекістам. Ховали тут і людей, розстріляних в наступні роки, наприклад, радянських солдат в 1941 за те, що потрапили в німецьке оточення. Як вважає проф. Шаповал, проведені до сьогодні розкопки не можна вважати повністю завершеними: Биківня може ховати ще багато більше страшних таємниць.

Ще наприкінці 1980-х серед похованих були знайдені рештки польських офіцерів. З того часу поляки виявляють величезне зацікавлення Биківнею, та проводять там свої власні пошуки. Поки що їм вдалося ідентифікувати 1 800 польських громадян. 24 червня 2001 року там побував Папа Павло II. 4 вересня 2012 року в Биківні була відкрита польська частина меморіалу, яку тепер постійно відвідують польські делегації.

На відміну від польської, українська частина меморіалу і досі незавершена, а проект, автором якого є Лариса Скорик, виглядає недоладним: традиційний Вічний вогонь і стіна з іменами жертв терору. Найголовніше – немає тут музею, що в наочних матеріалах мав би представити новим поколінням страшну історію Биківні.

Розповідь проф. Шаповала викликала дуже багато запитань. Одне з них – чому про Бабиний Яр знають в усьому світі, а про Биківню не знають по-справжньому навіть в самій Україні? Д-р Шаповал вважає, що це, безперечно, вина української влади, яка не піклується належним чином про збереження національної пам'яті. Саме створення музею і розповсюдження правди про страшні злочини комуністичного режиму, одним з яких і є масові поховання в Биківні, сприятимуть вихованню нових поколінь українців-патріотів, позбавлених фальшивих ілюзій про "щасливі радянські часи".

Турчинов хоче візового режиму з Росією з нового року

(Радіо Свобода)—Секретар Ради національної безпеки й оборони України Олександр Турчинов виступає за запровадження візового режиму з Росією з нового року.

«Ще в 2014 році РНБО ухвалила рішення щодо введення візового режиму з Росією і доручила Кабінету міністрів реалізувати це завдання. Вже перший етап цього завдання реалізований. Ви знаєте, на територію України громадянин Росії може потрапити лише по закордонному паспорту. Але я переконаний, з нового року ми повинні запровадити реальний і достатньо жорсткий візовий контроль, візовий режим із Росією», – сказав Турчинов в інтерв'ю «5 каналу».

За його словами, однією з причин, чому уряд України не прискорює запровадження візового режиму з Росією, є значна кількість українців, які перебувають у Російській Федерації. «Ми розуміємо, що відразу будуть синхронні дії Росії», – наголосив Турчинов.

У березні 2014 року після анексії Росією Криму Рада національної безпеки і оборони України доручила Міністерству закордонних справ запровадити візовий режим для громадян Росії. Конкретного часу, протягом якого такий режим має бути запроваджений, РНБО не вказала. Згодом прем'єр Арсеній Яценюк заявив, що із запровадженням візового режиму з Росією поспішати не варто.

PHOTO – HOLODOMOR NATIONAL AWARENESS TOUR
Ribbon Cutting at Queen's Park

Holodomor Mobile Classroom launched

(HREC)—The Holodomor Mobile Classroom, a new initiative for teaching about the Famine of 1932-33, was the focus of a commemoration at the Ontario Legislative Assembly at Queen's Park on November 24. The customized RV, with the words "Holodomor – The Ukrainian Genocide" emblazoned across forty feet of blue sky and wheat fields, was a striking sight against the background of the Legislative Building. The Holodomor Mobile Classroom will tour the province of Ontario and then the country teaching about the manmade famine that starved to death millions of Ukrainians.

Ontario Minister of Education Liz Sandals and Member of the Provincial Parliament Yvan Baker, who has supported the project since its inception, cut the ribbon to launch the mobile classroom, which is the centerpiece of the Holodomor National Awareness Tour project.

Bohdan Onyschuk of the Canada-Ukraine Foundation, which spearheaded the project, said, "We are excited that the Holodomor Mobile Classroom is ready to begin visiting schools, community events, and other venues, where it will promote awareness of the Holodomor and the consequences of hate, oppression, and discrimination."

Paul Grod, National President of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), addressed the gathering, noting that Ukraine again faces forces determined to undermine it. Also in attendance were Taras Bahriy, President of UCC-Toronto Branch; Julie Dzerowicz, Member of Parliament (Davenport); and two Canadians who lived through the Holodomor, Stefan Horlatch and Mykola Latyshko. The ceremony included a blessing of the bus by Bishop Andriy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and Bishop Stephen Chmilar and Rev. Petro Dvirnik of the Ukrainian Canadian Catholic Church.

Minister Liz Sandals stated, "The Holodomor Mobile Classroom will provide students with an innovative learning experience about social justice, human rights and democratic values in relation to the genocide by famine which killed millions of Ukrainians. This supports the goals of our Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy which encourages students to learn about diverse histories, perspectives, and cultures."

The new resource supports Canadian and World Studies, Social Sciences and Humanities courses in secondary schools as well as Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy which aims to create an inclusive education system that values diversity and respect for others. Modules will be available in French.

The Province of Ontario has committed $750,000 to raise awareness of the Holodomor among students in public schools. Students in urban, rural and northern communities will benefit from the state-of-the-art audio-visual experience featuring a 28-foot video wall. A facilitator will lead an interactive lesson that develops critical thinking skills as students practice the historian's craft, investigating sources and analyzing artifacts. Lessons underscore the importance of human rights and the rule of law as well as the concept of genocide. More than 10,000 students per year across Canada are expected to benefit. Wheelchair accessible, the mobile classroom can accommodate up to 34 visitors at a time.

The Government of Canada has provided a three-year grant of $1.5 million to support the project. The Province of Manitoba is providing educational expertise and other in-kind support. The project is carried out by the Canada-Ukraine Foundation (project lead), the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC), the Ukrainian Canadian Research and Documentation Centre (UCRDC), and the Holodomor Research and Education Consortium (HREC) of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta.

The Holodomor Mobile Classroom will visit universities, government buildings, fairs and community events as well as schools. To arrange a visit of the mobile classroom, contact the Holodomor National Awareness Tour at 416 966-9800; or via the project website www.holodomortour.ca .

Joly commemorates Holodomor

(UkrNews)— Minister of Canadian Heritage Mélanie Joly made the following statement Nov. 27 commemorating the Holodomor:

"This week Canadians commemorate one of the greatest tragedies of the last century: the deaths of millions of Ukrainians who perished as victims of a man-made famine under Stalin from 1932 to 1933. This famine is among the worst crimes against humanity ever perpetrated by a dictatorship.

"In 2008, Canada became the first nation to recognize the Ukrainian famine of 1932-33 as an act of genocide. Parliament unanimously passed a bill establishing the fourth Saturday in November as Ukrainian Famine and Genocide ("Holodomor") Memorial Day.

"Remembering the Holodomor also pays tribute to the Ukrainian-Canadian community, the third-largest Ukrainian population in the world. Canadians of Ukrainian origin have made invaluable contributions to our country's development for more than a century.

"As Minister of Canadian Heritage, I stand with the Ukrainian community and with all Canadians in commemorating the Ukrainian Famine and Genocide of 1932-33."

Gareth Jones diaries provide an eyewitness account of the Holodomor

(UkrNews)—Professor Lubomyr Luciuk conducted a three-city tour of Western Canada last month to promote the publication of "Tell Them We Are Starving: The 1933 Soviet Diaries of Gareth Jones"

"Finally we have preserved eyewitness notes of an western journalist for posterity", he said speaking in Edmonton, Nov. 27.

Prof. Luciuk also made presentations in Calgary and Winnipeg.

The book "Tell Them We Are Starving: The 1933 Diaries of Gareth Jones" was recently released as part of The Holodomor Occasional Papers Series.

Professor Lubomyr Luciuk

The new book provides facsimiles of the three pocket notebooks as well as a transcription of the contents that Welsh journalist Gareth Jones collected during a three-week stay in the USSR during March 1933, when famine was devastating areas of the USSR, particularly Ukraine, the Kuban region of the North Caucasus and the Lower Volga.

According to Dr. Ray Gamache, a media historian and the book's transcriber, the diaries constitute one of the most important independent, verifiable records of a horrific event, now known as the Holodomor, recorded even as it was unfolding in Ukraine. As a result of that journey, Jones is now recognized as the journalist most responsible for exposing the Great Famine that caused the deaths of more than 4.5 million Ukrainians.

In his introduction to the book, Dr. Gamache notes that transcribing the notebooks was anything but easy, thanks to Jones' tendency to quote source material from Ukraine by using the Russian alphabet or vice versa. A graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, Jones was fluent in Welsh, German, French and Russian. That fluency is reflected in the diaries, which contain passages in those languages and which Jones used to publish more than 20 newspaper articles upon his return to Great Britain.

For Dr. Gamache, the most compelling sections are those chronicling Jones' unescorted 40-mile walking tour through villages, and collective and state farms, after Jones got off the train headed for Kharkiv. In these Ukrainian villages, Jones found children with swollen bellies, families without food and unemployed workers without bread cards, doomed to a slow, painful death by starvation.

"By the time Western journalists were allowed back into Ukraine in the autumn of 1933, the worst of the famine was over and a new crop was being harvested," Dr. Gamache writes. "The fate of the millions of Ukrainians starved to death became a contested, politicized issue, and remained as such for decades."

After Jones' death in Manchuria in 1935, the diaries remained lost for more than 50 years until Jones' great-nephew, Nigel L. Colley, discovered them. In 2003 his mother, Dr. Margaret Siriol Colley, delivered a speech on Jones' reporting as part of the Ukrainian diaspora's 70th anniversary commemorations of the Holodomor. The diaries were first exhibited in November 2009 by Dr. Rory Finnin at The Wren Library, Trinity College, Jones' alma mater. Stories about this exhibition were published in over 200 newspapers worldwide.

Prof. Luciuk observed that The Holodomor: Occasional Papers Series is intended to disseminate important documentary evidence and new research on the Great Famine of 1932-1933. The first volume published was the 1953 speech by Raphael Lemkin, "Soviet Genocide in the Ukraine," in which the "Father of the U.N. Genocide Convention" specifically identified the Ukrainian famine as a classic example of genocide.

In his lectures, Prof. Luciuk referred to Lemkin's 1953 speech as evidence that the Holodomor was indeed a genocide even though it is not recognized as such by most world powers including the United States and the United Kingdom.

He also noted that western countries were aware of the Holodomor when it happened but covered it up the story making them complicit in the famine.

The biggest denier of the Holodomor was the New York Times correspondent Walter Duranty, who also set out to destroy the career of Jones for reporting the truth about the genocide, said Prof. Luciuk

Copies of "Tell Them We Are Starving: The 1933 Soviet Diaries of Gareth Jones" are available for $50, which includes postage and handling, from The Kashtan Press, 849 Wartman Ave., Kingston, ON, Canada, K7M 2Y6.

Bezan named Conservative Defence Critic

(UkrNews)—James Bezan, Member of Parliament for Selkirk-Interlake-Eastman, has been appointed to the Conservative Party's shadow cabinet by Opposition Interim Leader Rona Ambrose.

Bezan recently served as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of National Defence in the Conservative government. Previous to that he was the chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence.

"I am grateful that the Leader of the Official Opposition, Rona Ambrose, has put her trust in me," said Bezan.

"It is truly an honour to be asked to serve as the Conservative defence critic and to be part of such a dynamic team. I am looking forward to working alongside Pierre Paul-Hus, MP for Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Charles who enjoyed a distinguished 22 year career in the Canadian Armed Forces. He will serve as Critic for National Defence (Associate).

"I am proud of our Conservative record and the work we have done in support of the Canadian Armed Forces.

"Canada has a long and proud military history. When possible, we have brought peace to war torn areas. And at times of war, we have stood shoulder to shoulder with our allies and friends. There is no doubt that at this point in time, we need to be standing with our allies in the war against ISIS.

"The horrific attacks in Paris and Beirut, and the bombing of a Russian airliner speaks to the fact that the reach of ISIS goes well beyond Iraq and Syria. Canada and our allies must do everything possible to stop ISIS from carrying out their barbaric jihadist terrorism and establishing their caliphate.

"Ms. Ambrose has said we are prepared to work with the Liberal government when it comes to Canada's national defence efforts. Canada's involvement in the allied air combat mission should be maintained, allowing the Royal Canadian Air Force to provide air support to Iraqi and Peshmerga Security Forces as they carry out the ground war against ISIS. The participation of Canada's CF-18 fighter jets have been very significant, destroying ISIS fighting positions, weapon caches and armouments.

"We are asking Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to follow the leadership of our Conservative Party and commit to a debate and vote on any changes to Canada's military mission against ISIS. Following the Paris attacks, we will also support a more robust training mission by our Special Operations Forces.

"Despite the recent assurances by Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan that Canadians should not fear ISIS, many Canadians are concerned. Let us never forget that ISIS inspired the terrorist attacks last year here at home in St. Jean-sur-Richelieu and Ottawa, claiming the lives of Canadian soldier Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent and Corporal Nathan Cirillo.

"It is imperative that the Liberal Government face the new reality and not resort to political expediency to implement campaign promises that are no longer relevant," he added.

Bezan marks Holodomor

(Office of MP Bezan)—Tony Clement, MP for Parry Sound-Muskoka and Conservative Foreign Affairs Critic, and James Bezan, MP for Selkirk-Interlake and Conservative National Defence Critic, on Nov. 27 issued the following statement commemorating the 82nd anniversary of the Holodomor:

"Today we join Ukrainians in Canada and across the world in marking Holodomor Memorial Day. The Holodomor was a horrendous and intentional, systematic artificial famine that saw the death of millions upon millions of Ukrainians in 1932-33 by Joseph Stalin. It was an attempt to put an end to the Ukrainian people's aspirations for a free and independent country by a ruthless communist regime. This horrific act of genocide saw Europe's breadbasket depleted to a barren land of suffering.

"Indeed, today we remember not only the millions who died for being Patriotic Ukrainians, but we also honour those who survived, and who so generously shared their stories of survival. We are proud that in 2008 we were part of the Government that recognized the Holodomor for what it was: genocide. This was just one of the many actions taken by Canada in demonstrating our unity with our Ukrainian allies.

"We're also pleased that the Holodomor Mobile Classroom was recently launched by the Canada-Ukraine Foundation, so that the lessons we learned from this dark period in history will never be forgotten. We must always remember and honour those that suffered and those that perished in these horrific acts.

"It is also important to acknowledge that the struggle of the Ukrainian people is not over. Canada stands proudly with the people of Ukraine as they work towards a brighter future for their children and grandchildren.

"This week, we stand in solidarity with over 1.2 million Canadians of Ukrainian heritage, and Ukrainians around the world, and remember those affected by this dark chapter in Ukraine's history. We encourage all Canadians to attend Holodomor Memorial Day services being held in communities across the country this Saturday, November 28th."

Group discussions at the ULEC Vision conference.

ULEC presents its vision

Brings the Ukrainian language education community together

(ULEC)—The Ukrainian Language Education Centre (ULEC) presented its Vision to over 50 people the weekend of Nov. 28-29 at St. Peter Centre in Edmonton. The event was filled with community stakeholders, including Ukrainian community leaders from four provinces (via skype), teachers from Edmonton's Ukrainian schools, parent advisory group representatives, school consultants and University of Alberta colleagues. After an introduction about the Ukrainian Language Education Centre by Dr. Alla Nedashkivska, Acting Director of ULEC, Dr. Olenka Bilash, Senior Advisor, presented results of the Vision research project. The two researchers together spearheaded the process of steering ULEC's future course.

The event was entitled "ULEC 2030 – the future of Ukrainian language education" and, indeed, that is what the discussion became. About the impressive reception Nedashkivska said: "We were planning to hold a closing event to present our Vision to those who had contributed to the process, but as the attendance list grew we realized we would be bringing the community of Ukrainian language educators and community leaders together… and that support for our initiative is immense."

The victim of staffing cuts and reduced funding, ULEC strives to accomplish its goals, while relying heavily on volunteer time and expertise. Critical technology knowledge is required to adapt and build language resources for the future, and the work that this and fulfilling the new vision requires is considerable. At the same time, ULEC is a unique institution that can provide the leadership and the 40-years-worth of experience and community networks to get the work done. One participant noted that "ULEC reflects incredible expertise on teaching Ukrainian. It should be seen as an international Centre of Excellence."

ULEC was established in 1976 as part of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS). The first Director of CIUS, Dr. Manoly R. Lupul, set an early vision for ULEC: it was "designed to become the place in Canada where all the materials important to teaching Ukrainian at the pre-university level could be accessed by teachers and researchers" and housed a variety of print and audiovisual resources and teaching aids.

Since that time, ULEC has made significant and fundamental contributions to Ukrainian Language education in curriculum and resource creation from pre-school through post-secondary, professional development, as well as research across the country and diaspora around the world. In truth, "the Ukrainian Canadian community depends on this stream being sustained, rejuvenated and expanded" wrote Bilash in the 40+ page vision report, and added, "ULEC strives to form relationships with other language groups across the province to advocate for the use and maintenance of small but significant language groups."

The Vision project, which took place over the past year, was designed to solicit feedback about ULEC's future and its role in the community from a broad perspective. The process included an environmental scan, literature review, focus group meetings, and a widely circulated draft and final report. "It is a synthesis of the multiple face to face and online consultations with over 50 people including parents with children in the Ukrainian Bilingual Program and in Ridni shkoly/Kursy, teachers, administrators, consultants, government personnel, university faculty and students, and community leaders from four provinces. It was vetted by all those who participated in the visioning process and revised accordingly."

The ULEC visioning project "arose at a moment of acknowledgement of historical change. A decade of re-visioning, branding, economic downsizing and restructuring at the University of Alberta, almost 40 years of ULEC's existence within the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (CIUS), the rise of social media and technology in knowledge transformation and communication, the emergence of STEM elitism (i.e. in science, technology, engineering and mathematics studies and research), renewed unity and percolated unrest in Ukraine as well as increased opportunities to collaborate with Ukraine, the closing of Alberta's Learning Resource Centre, and the retirement of long-term Director Marusia Petryshyn collectively offered a timely opportunity for reflection and imagining where ULEC might be in 2030."

Groups that have a vested interest in ULEC's success are numerous, ranging from the CIUS, the Institute that ULEC is nested within, to the school boards, teachers, and parent groups that ULEC supports. And the end-users of ULEC's materials is broad as well – what first started out as materials produced for the local community now touches Ukrainian language teachers and students across Canada, and indeed the international diaspora community and Ukraine, in addition to other second-language programs which have learned from the Ukrainian Bilingual Program example.

The Vision event was structured to benefit from having multiple and diverse audiences of supporters in the room. Stakeholders were invited to attend not only to add input to the process but to recognize their place in the Ukrainian language education community and what they could do to support ULEC in its future endeavours. "Their presence strengthens our resolve to enact the new vision, and we hope that people in the room have identified ways in which they will be able to contribute to its realization," comments Bilash.

The consultation does not stop with establishing the Vision. Event attendees were able to converse and contribute to the process both in small group discussions and then by sharing those results with the entire group. Discussions revolved around the next steps for ULEC, and attendees provided input to such questions as how to tap into ULEC's research capabilities, how to contribute to the digital age of learning resources for teachers, parents, students, administrators and community, and how to develop a pan-Canadian online professional community of practice. As Nedashkivska informs: "Stating a new vision for ULEC will guide our goals and future direction. It serves as a foundation and motivation to all stakeholders. At the same time, though, our work continues, and the input we received today from our supporters will be used to consolidate future steps toward many components in the vision."

Explosive disposal equipment transferred to Ukraine

(UkrNews)—Stéphane Dion, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada has announced that explosive ordnance disposal equipment has been transferred to the Ukrainian Armed Forces

This non-lethal equipment will enable the Ukrainian Armed Forces to safely dispose of unexploded ammunition, such as artillery shells, thereby contributing to the safety and security of Ukrainians living in the affected regions.

This explosive ordnance disposal equipment has been provided by Global Affairs Canada and will be used during training offered by Canadian Armed Forces experts as part of Operation UNIFIER. A joint initiative by Canada's Department of National Defence and Global Affairs Canada, Operation UNIFIER supports Ukraine's efforts to maintain its security, stability and territorial integrity.

This is only one aspect of Canada's multi-faceted support to Ukraine. Since January 2014, Canada has announced more than $700 million in assistance to respond to the crisis in Ukraine, which has claimed the lives of more than 8,000 people.

As Prime Minister Trudeau told President Putin at the G-20 Antalya Summit, Canada stands with the Ukrainian people and expects Russia to engage fully in the Minsk process. This includes ending its supply and support to insurgents in eastern Ukraine and fully respecting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Canada welcomes the initial steps taken by Ukraine to implement the political track of the Minsk agreements and looks forward to the continuation of an inclusive constitutional process.

Canada calls for further progress by all parties in implementing the Minsk agreements, building on steps in the past two months, including in the important area of weapons withdrawal from the Line of Contact. Renewed reports of ceasefire violations in recent weeks are cause for concern. Canada will continue to monitor this situation carefully and respond as necessary, in coordination with partners and allies.

Savchenko trial expected to finish by end of year

(RFE/RL)—A spokesman for Russia's top investigative agency says the trial of the Ukrainian military officer charged with the murder of two Russian journalists is expected to finish before the end of the year.

Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin told Russian media on December 4 that he expects a "tough" verdict in the trial of Nadia Savchenko.

She faces 25 years in prison if found guilty of complicity in the killing of two Russian journalists in eastern Ukraine in 2014 and of crossing into Russia illegally.

Savchenko rejects the charges and says she was kidnapped by Russians after being captured by Russian-backed separatists.

Savchenko's plight and defiant stance in captivity have made her a national hero in Ukraine.

The 34-year-old has spent over a year in custody in Russia during which she protested her detention by going on hunger strike for more than 80 days.

She was also elected in absentia to Ukraine's parliament last year.

Andreychuk calls release of Ukrainian prisoners in Russia

(UkrNews)—Senator Andreychuk reacted with concern to recent reports that the appeals of two Ukrainian activists were rejected by the Russian Supreme Court on November 24, 2015.

Oleg Sentsov and Oleksandr Kolchenko have been imprisoned in Russia since early May 2014 on charges related to acts of terrorism. Both men were active participants in the protests against the Russian annexation of Crimea in March 2014.

No substantial evidence was produced to support the allegations levied against them in court. Both convictions rested on the testimony of another activist, Gennady Afanasyev, reportedly obtained under duress.

"The unjust imprisonment and rejection of appeals by Mr. Sentsov and Mr. Kolchenko demonstrates an intolerable lack of due process and real justice," stated Senator Andreychuk. "Governments in democratic countries must ensure that charges comply with the principles of international law and that their obligations in an international community are honoured," the Senator added.

By rejecting the appeals of Sentsov and Kolchenko, the Russian government has once again refused to honour its obligations under the Minsk agreements and the resolutions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Oleg Sentsov, 39, is a celebrated Ukrainian filmmaker. His debut film, "Gamer", premiered at the Rotterdam Film Festival in 2012.

In May 2014, the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation arrested Sentsov in Simferopol on accusations related to acts of terrorism. Several days later, Oleksandr Kolchenko, a 27-year-old ecologist, was detained on similar charges. Both men were subsequently removed from Ukraine and imprisoned in Moscow.

On August 25, 2015, Sentsov was sentenced to serve 20 years, while Kolchenko was sentenced to serve 10 years as his accomplice.

Sentsov and Kolchenko's case illustrates the plight of numerous Ukrainian activists unjustly incarcerated and subjected to inhumane treatment while serving sentences in Russia. Earlier this year, Ukrainian pilot and MP, Nadiya Savchenko, was captured and imprisoned in Moscow on unsubstantiated accusations.

Ukrainian News is now available at the following locations in Edmonton:

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Russia warns of penalties on Kyiv after failed trade talks

(RFE/RL)—Russia is likely to penalize Ukrainian imports starting in January after negotiators failed to agree on ways to address Moscow's objections to Kyiv's free-trade agreement with the European Union.

"It is a very probable scenario that there will not be an agreement before January 1," when the EU trade pact goes into effect, and that will prompt Russia to end Ukraine's preferential trade status, Russian Economy Minister Alexei Ulyukayev said after unsuccessful trade talks between Russia, Ukraine, and the EU in Brussels on December 1.

While the three parties agreed to keep talking, time is running out on the EU's yearlong bid to quell Russian opposition to the accord, which is at the root of the broader conflict between Kyiv and Moscow.

"The clock is ticking very, very fast," said EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom after hosting the meeting. She stressed that she expects the agreement to go into effect on January 1 as Ukraine and the EU are no longer willing to heed Russian calls for a delay after having already postponed the accord for a year in an effort to appease Moscow.

Malmstrom said she was willing to continue trying to address Russian concerns next year, but only if Moscow does not take retaliatory measures.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin criticized Russian negotiators for delivering new demands just before the negotiating session on December 1, some of which he said were "unacceptable."

Malmstrom also said she was "a bit surprised" when "Russia came unexpectedly with a very, very long list of amendments that they presented at the table."

Kyiv's sharp break with Moscow in the last two years was triggered by its move toward closer trade with the West.

Ukrainian wavering over whether to sign the EU trade accord in late 2013 fuelled street protests that toppled pro-Moscow president Viktor Yanukovych, leading to Russia's annexation of Crimea and a revolt by pro-Russia separatists in the east.

Now, after nearly two years of sharp conflict and a raft of tit-for-tat trade sanctions between Moscow and Kyiv, Ukrainian officials reckon they have little to lose from the end of favored trading status on January 1.

Malmstrom said that technical teams from the three sides could meet again as early as next week, and they could reach "practical solutions" on such issues as veterinary standards and customs data-sharing.

But she noted that the trade dispute has become part of the broader political confrontation between Moscow and Western powers, and it is not clear if either side has the political will to resolve it.

Russia maintains that the Ukraine-EU deal could lead to a flood of European imports across its own borders and damage the competitiveness of Russian exports to Ukraine.

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Klitschko to take up option of Fury rematch

(BBC Sports)—Wladimir Klitschko will attempt to regain the world heavyweight title by taking up his option for a rematch with new champion Tyson Fury next year.

Briton Fury, 27, beat the Ukrainian in Dusseldorf, Germany, on Nov. 28 to take the WBA, IBF and WBO belts.

The contract for the fight included a clause for a rematch, for which the date and the venue have to be decided.

"Failure is not an option," said Klitschko, 39, on his prospects of winning back the titles.

"I was really frustrated directly after the fight, but after some short nights, I now know that I am much better than my performance on Saturday.

"I couldn't show much full potential at any time. This is what I want to change in the rematch, and I will."

Klitschko has had two spells as world champion, the first from 2000 to 2003. Having regained the WBO belt in 2004, he went 11 years and 19 successful defences before losing to Fury.

Manchester fighter Fury said on Nov. 29 that he would beat Klitschko again if they were reunited in the ring next year.

Fury's uncle and trainer Peter told BBC Radio Manchester it was "fantastic news" Klitschko had taken up the option.

He added: "We're definitely looking for a stoppage next time out - Tyson only performed to about 60% of his ability. He could have stopped Wlad.

"We're looking at Wembley stadium in London, possibly mid-to-late May, and once Tyson gets rid of Klitschko then straight away we will be looking to Deontay Wilder to unify all of the belts."

Unbeaten American Wilder holds the WBC version of the heavyweight title.

BBC Radio 5 live boxing commentator Mike Costello: "Klitschko tweeted a couple of days ago how he was still suffering, and that sentiment explains why he has committed to the rematch only four days after his defeat.

"The setback against Fury ended an unbeaten run for Klitschko stretching back 11 years and 22 fights.

"At this stage there is no mention of a date or a venue for the return - they will decided with a view to maximising the purse for each boxer.

"Although Klitschko turns 40 next March, the contest was the first of a new five-fight deal with German broadcaster RTL.

"So, as he said on another online posting, the story will continue."

Tyson Fury (right) was awarded victory over Wladimir Klitschko

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Nejc Pečnik heads away from Vyacheslav Shevchuk as Slovenia try not to concede the crucial away goal

Ukraine survive Slovenia onslaught

(UEFA)—Boštjan Cesar's header gave Slovenia hope of overturning a 2-0 play-off first-leg deficit, but Ukraine made it to UEFA EURO 2016, a red card and a late goal for the visitors twisting the knife for the home side. Nov. 17.

The match in Maribor was played at full pelt from the off, with both captains booked in the opening exchanges. Yevhen Konoplyanka drew a save from Samir Handanovič but Slovenia seized the initiative, Cesar heading in at the far post after goalkeeper Andriy Pyatov had denied both Branko Ilić and Milivoje Novakovič from Valter Birsa's cross.

Ukraine were prevented from playing their usual game down the flanks but provided plenty of menace, Yevhen Seleznyov testing Handanovič with a volley. Slovenia kept up the pressure, though, yet for all the free-kicks they won, Birsa's deliveries never quite found their mark.

Handanovič kept his team in the running, making himself big to keep out Seleznyov's low drive after Konoplyanka had seized on Kevin Kampl's error. Nejc Pečnik had a chance to build on that moments before the break but shot straight at Pyatov after being played in on the left.

The pace did not dip after the interval, Handanovič fending off a Konoplyanka effort, but Ukraine's composure became more marked as time ticked on, Vyacheslav Shevchuk and Andriy Yarmolenko both getting attempts on target before Yaroslav Rakitskiy whipped one over the bar.

At the other end, Pyatov repelled another Cesar header following a Birsa corner in the last 20 minutes, and Zlatan Ljubijankič had a shot blocked in the box. Emotions boiled over as Mišo Brečko was sent off for a high challenge on Konoplyanka, and with Slovenia pushing desperately at the death, Ukraine countered, Yarmolenko finishing from Artem Kravets's ball. Game over.

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Amsterdam countryside provides many attractions

(UkrNews)—If you're flying to Kyiv with KLM – which is the only airline that provides one-stop service from Edmonton — as well as from Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto and Montreal, you may consider stopping off in Amsterdam for a few days.

Doing so will not cost you anything more for your flight as KLM offers free stopovers.

While the city itself has many attractions, which we outlined in the previous issue, there is also plenty to do and see in the surrounding countryside.

The Amsterdam & Region Day ticket lets you explore the beaches of Zandvoort, Edam's cheese market, the Aalsmeer flower auction, Keukenhof Gardens and traditional villages like Volendam and Zaanse Schans with a single 24-hour public transport pass. When you purchase this ticket, you'll also get a public transport guide for the Amsterdam region (PDF) filled with useful tips and sightseeing highlights.

The Amsterdam & Region Day Ticket costs €13.50, or €10.00 with an I Amsterdam Card.

One such side trip may be to Haarlem with spectacular monuments dating back almost 800 years.

Frans Hals, one of the Netherlands' greatest painters, is celebrated in the Frans Hals Museum (alongside paintings by his peers). Of course, Haarlem has made an impact in more recent times too. Its Jugendstil train station is one of the most beautiful in the country and the city is a bustling hub of great cafés, shops and restaurants.

Another may be the New Land, areas that were reclaimed from the sea, giving birth to the new cities of Almere and Lelystad. Not only are they internationally acclaimed playgrounds for architecture and design, they are also blessed with expanses of wild nature on the doorstep.

During our visit we opted for a day tour of Old Holland. With its countless windmills, churches and old-fashioned farmhouses, stepping out into Old Holland can feel like being in a Golden Age painting.

Noord-Holland towns such as Marken, Volendam and Edam hark back to times of more honest crafts, showcasing the traditional skills the region was famous for: shipbuilding, fishing and cheese making. Alongside such classic industries, you can also experience the heritage of the industrial revolution — a time when smoking chimney stacks and spinning sails enabled the mass production of chocolate and biscuits.

Getting on one of the regional buses at Amsterdam's Central Station, we proceed first to the town of Volendam.

Volendam is a popular tourist attraction in the Netherlands, well known for its old fishing boats and the traditional clothing still worn by some residents. The women's costume of Volendam, with its high, pointed bonnet, is one of the most recognizable of the Dutch traditional costumes, and is often featured on tourist postcards and posters (although there are believed to be fewer than 50 women now wearing the costume as part of their daily lives, most of them elderly).

Originally, Volendam was the location of the harbor of the nearby Edam, which was situated at the mouth of the IJ bay. In 1357, the inhabitants of Edam dug a shorter canal to the Zuiderzee with its own separate har-

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Amsterdam countryside provides many attractions

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bor. This removed the need for the original harbor, which was then dammed and used for land reclamation. Farmers and local fishermen settled there, forming the new community of Vollendam, which literally meant something like 'Filled dam'. In the early part of the 20th century it became something of an artists' retreat, with both Picasso and Renoir spending time here. What is unusual in this mostly Protestant country, the majority of the population in Volendam belongs to the Roman Catholic Church, which is deeply connected to the village culture. Historically, many missionaries and bishops grew up in Volendam. Today there is the chapel of Our Lady of the Water, which is located in a village park.

A visit to Volendam typically begins with a stroll down De Dijk, the main harbour strip, which remains a lively shopping and residential street. On one side you have the working trawlers and fishing boats, which remain the lifeblood for so many in the area. On the other you can see the traditional wooden buildings and homes.

From Volendam we took the ferry to Marken. Marken is a former island in the Markermeer. This peninsula remains a popular seaside getaway that's reachable via a long causeway or a reliable fleet of ferries. Locals and international tourists alike flock to the island to take in its scenic views and enjoy its rich cultural history, such as the preserved fishing culture.

Marken is unique in that its residents have preserved many of the island's traditions. While you may not encounter too many people still dressed in attire that was all the rage in similar fishing communities back in the 19th century, you will find many of its historic homesteads still standing.

Upon arrival you're greeted by a beautiful view of the green wooden houses alongside the harbour. To grasp the old island's history and people, head to the Marker Museum. Also check out the Paard van Marken, a distinctive lighthouse that dates back to 1839, reminding of a horse watching out over the sea.

After a full day we returned to Amsterdam

For more information, visit: <www.klm,ca>, <www.iamsterdam.com> or <www.amsterdam.info/sights>.

PHOTO – LESIA LEVYTSKY

A picturesque canal in Volendam